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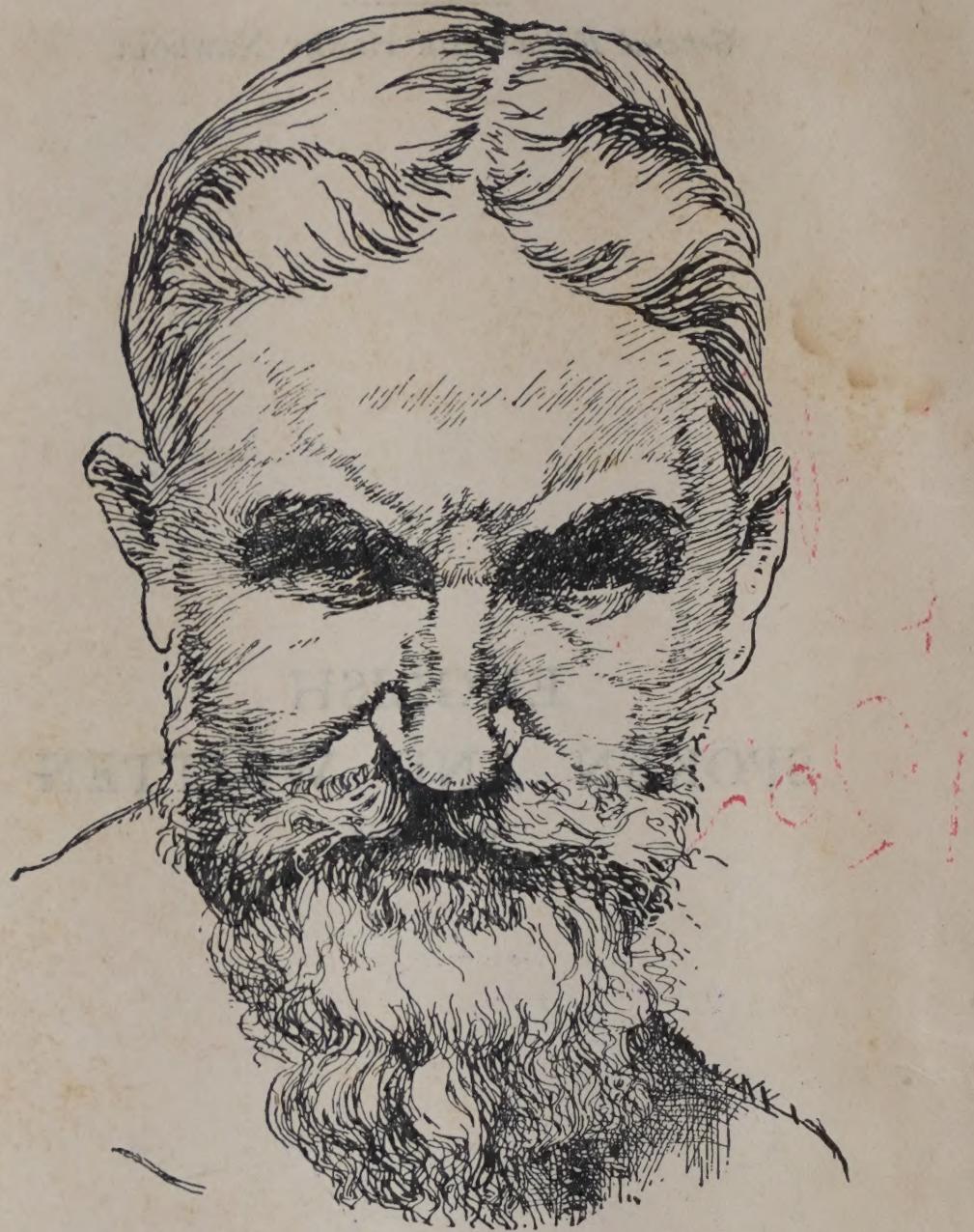
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**ENGLISH**  
**SPOKEN AND WRITTEN**  
**Part IV**

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GEORGE BERNARD SHAW

*From a pen-drawing by  
E. Heber Thompson*

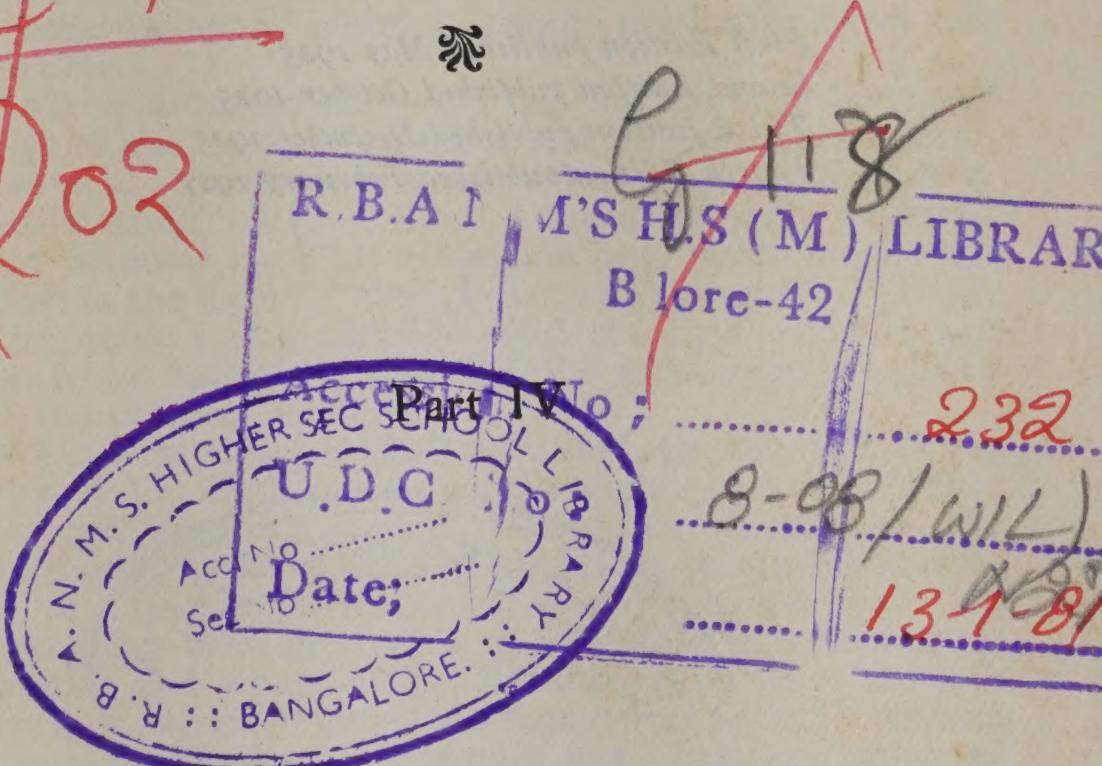
# ENGLISH

## SPOKEN AND WRITTEN

A Graduated Course  
for Schools in Four Parts

by

RICHARD WILSON



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## PREFACE

THIS little book embodies an attempt to deal with several forms of verbal expression, of which the essay is only one, and by no means the most important. It begins with an examination into the nature of the essay, distinguishing the real thing, which is one of the most beautiful and most difficult forms of literary expression, from the school composition, which is loosely called by the same name and which is usually neither an essay nor an article.

“Write an essay on ——” has for too long been the refuge of the English examiner and the bane of the pupil. A party of schoolboys was invited to go to the Wembley Exhibition in 1924. “Shall I have to write an essay when we come back?” asked one boy, by no means the dullest in the form. “Well, yes,” was the reply. “Then, please, may I stay away?” said the boy, who did not wish to be haunted all day by the forthcoming ordeal; and the petition was granted.

What was wrong? As I have said, the boy was by no means dull. With a little encouragement he would have given an excellent verbal description of some of the things seen, or have been delighted to be made the subject of a jocular *viva voce* on what he had noted. He might have been interested to take part in a debate on the Use and Abuse of the Exhibition, or have made a speech or delivered a short lecture on his visit, for he was an excellent talker. He would have enjoyed the composition of a dramatic dialogue between a supporter and a critic of the Exhibition, or even have made a little play from his experiences, or entered up a page or two of a diary or written a real letter to a friend or relative describing his inspection. Moreover, he was not entirely inexpert with the pencil, and would have enjoyed giving a few of his impressions through this medium, and, if

approached in the right manner, have written at least a portion of a "poem" on the Imperial effort.

And why not? It is high time that the school essay was dismissed as an arrant humbug, or at least reserved for those few who have a gift for self-revelation through the written word. There is no necessity for the rest to remain inarticulate. Given greater freedom and genuine encouragement, they will soon learn to express themselves in one or other of the varied forms mentioned above. And these forms are considered *seriatim* in the following pages. It is significant that in 1924 candidates entering for the London General School Examination were given the option of substituting a dialogue for an essay; and this movement towards greater freedom will probably extend.

Acknowledgments for the use of copyright material in this book are due, and are hereby cordially tendered to, Mr. Harry C. Minchin and Messrs. J. M. Dent and Sons, Ltd., for the dialogue entitled "Shenstone and his Ballad" from the author's *Talks and Traits*; to Messrs. Chatto and Windus for "A Plea for Gas Lamps" by R. L. Stevenson; and to Mr. Fisher Unwin for the letter by Lewis Carroll from the *Life and Letters* by S. Dodgson Collingwood.

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“THE first virtue, the touchstone of a masculine style, is its use of the active verb and the concrete noun. When you write in the active voice, ‘They gave him a silver teapot,’ you write as a man. When you write, ‘He was made the recipient of a silver teapot,’ you write Jargon.”      SIR A. T. QUILLER-COUCH.

“YOUR vocabulary must be chosen from the permanent, solid, stable parts of the language. . . . Use only words that will be understood to carry the same meaning to English readers in every part of the world. . . . Put their proper value on short clear-cut words that mean only one thing and leave no vagueness. . . . Don’t fall into mere current phrases.”

WALTER H. PAGE (*to his Son*).

“NEVER let a long sentence get out of hand. If it begins to run loose, tie it in a knot with a good strong inversion : swing it round on a pivot.”

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

## THE PARROT

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW once gave an address on English, and began by asking his audience if they had ever known a family with a "celebrated talking parrot." The family, he said, asked their friends to come and hear Polly say such things as "Pretty Polly!" "Give me a lump of sugar," and "Fetch a cab." But when they got there they heard Polly produce nothing but what were to them inarticulate noises, yet were to the family intelligible phrases. The parrot, as a matter of fact, had originally spoken those words quite distinctly; then gradually there had set in a decay of language. The phrases had become modified little by little, until finally the parrot had arrived at sounds which were not in the least like the original thing. The family had not noticed the change which had been going on.

That was an instance of the decay of language which occurred very extensively among human beings. If they went into Covent Garden they would hear a great deal of that parrot talk. There was more of that parrot talk than they imagined, because, in regard to a great deal of it, they were in the relative position of the family to the parrot. Supposing, however, that a foreigner who had learned English well were put into Covent Garden, he would not understand the language there because it had gone through a process of decay, and the people there were not speaking English.

"What we ought to aim at," said Mr. Shaw, "is to *speak English that will be intelligible to a foreigner*. It is not sufficient for us to be intelligible to one another, because we are in the relation of the family to the parrot."

## FIRST SECTION—FORMS OF EXPRESSION

### CHAPTER I.—THE SHORT PARAGRAPH

§ 1. **The Peg and the Hat.**—A modern writer, discussing the choice of a subject for an essay, remarks, “Any peg will do to hang a hat upon ; the hat’s the thing.” Of course, the peg must be long enough and strong enough to support the hat, otherwise it will not do duty as a support ; but, if these conditions are satisfied, the hat is really the important matter, as you will readily agree. It is no exaggeration to say that an active mind can find something to say on any given subject under the sun. A great deal could be said and written even about “Silence.”

§ 2. **The Essay defined.**—The above writer is an essayist. Now, the dictionary defines the word “essay” in the following manner :—

**Essay**, *n.*, attempt (at) ; a literary composition (usu. prose and short) on any subject.

*Oxford Concise Dictionary.*

This definition is vague and indefinite, because it is not always easy to say whether any given “literary composition” is an essay or not. The first part of the definition is interesting. An essay is an “attempt at” or trial of a thing—you will find it spelt *assay* in Malory’s tales of King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table. It is not something which is completed

in every part ; if a subject is dealt with in this way, the composition becomes an *article* which ought to find a place in an encyclopædia. The real essayist has a free hand, chiefly because his work is not to produce an encyclopædia article but a “ literary composition ” ; that is to say, he must be careful about the form of the sentences and paragraphs of his essay, which must not only convey the ideas he has in his mind to the mind of the reader in the clearest possible manner, but must also create in that reader’s mind a feeling of pleasure and the idea that there is *not merely a pen but a living personality behind the writing*. An essay, you see, is a personal thing ; and its aim is the creation of pleasure ; \* an encyclopædia article is an impersonal one, and its aim is the summarizing and conveyance of information.

We are told that an essay is “ usually prose and short.” The adjective “ short ” is also indefinite, having no real meaning except by comparison. An essay is shorter than a novel or even than a novelette, but its length is variable, and depends, not upon its subject, but upon its author, who *brings his work to an end when he can no longer express himself so as to give pleasure to his reader*. In the Second Section of this book you will find specimen essays by some of the leading English essayists. It would be an easy matter to count or estimate the number of words in each of these essays, and even to find the average number. But when you have done so you will not be able to fix the length of the essay. The samples in our Second Section are chosen partly because of their shortness. Many essays are much longer.

The above dictionary maker seems to think that an essay may be in verse, but prose essays will serve

\* Webster’s *Dictionary* defines the essay as “ a literary composition, analytical or interpretative in nature, dealing with its subject from a more or less limited or personal standpoint, and permitting a considerable freedom of style and method.”

our turn when we come to consider this form of composition, and will provide a sufficiently severe test of our ability.

§ 3. **The Theme and the Paragraph.**—The foregoing remarks may appear to be somewhat discouraging. We cannot all be essayists any more than we can all be painters or musicians, and we may feel that we shall never be able to write in a “literary” way or achieve “the power to touch with ease, grace, precision, any note in the gamut of human thought or emotion.”\* We are tempted to give up the essay altogether, and to look round for more modest work. Let us consult the dictionary once more, and find out what is meant by a *theme*.

**Theme**, *n.*, subject on which one speaks, writes, or thinks; school composition; essay on given subject.

This is more encouraging. For the moment let us write *themes* instead of essays, for even a school composition, as well as a real essay, can be classed as a theme. That blessed word *theme*! It will cover many kinds of composition, provided each one has a definite subject from which the writer does not wander. We can begin in a modest way by writing short **paragraphs**. Perhaps some day we shall write real essays—“literary compositions (usu. prose) on any subject.”

§ 4. **Things seen and overheard.**—Consider the following paragraph:—

When my father was camped at Catterick before going to France mother and I went to Richmond, four miles from the camp. One morning I was looking out of the window on to a field opposite which was bordered with trees, and saw a big crow fly down beside a little pony which was grazing. It walked along by the side of the pony, chattering all the time. The same thing happened next day. On the third day, after walking by the pony’s

\* Professor Sir A. T. Quiller-Couch.

side for a little while, he hopped on to his back and started pulling hairs from its mane, which he took up to his nest. It came back time after time, and the pony did not seem to mind a bit.

This record of a “thing seen” was written by a boy of twelve,\* and is, in some degree, a “literary composition,” because it tells of something the author observed for himself, and is therefore coloured by his own individuality, that of a sympathetic Nature observer and lover of animals. It has verbal faults in connection with certain pronouns which you will be able to correct, but otherwise it is clearly expressed.

The following was written by a child of nine:—

The most beautiful thing I ever saw was a little primrose, with its dainty petals of a very pale yellow, and a delicate and slender stem. It comes out to brighten up the world, and also to tell us spring is here, for it is a spring flower. It waves to and fro in the cool spring breeze, and bows its head to the sun.

This little paragraph has touches of individuality and personal feeling which you will be able to find out for yourselves. The author’s use of adjectives is also commendable, while the personification in the last clause is simple and effective.

Note that each of the above writers *knew when to stop*. The value of a piece of composition does not depend upon its length.

Study the following:—

SCENE.—*A country road in South-western Scotland: An old man engaged in ditching: a visitor to the place stops to talk to him.*

*Old Man.* And what part of the country do you come from?

*Tourist.* I come from London.

\* Tom McCormick, 111 Harewood Street, Bradford, Yorks.—Quoted from the *Daily News*.

*Old Man.* Aye, that's a great town. I hear they have a court there every day in the week.

This is a record of an actual incident, but the old man spoke in broad Scots which you might not understand. The form of the narration reminds you that a paragraph need not always be descriptive, or take the form of a story, but may consist of a dialogue or a little piece of drama.

### EXERCISE I

1. Try to recall something seen or overheard by yourself or some one whom you know, and write down the record of it in a short paragraph, either descriptive or dramatic.
2. Describe shortly and simply the most beautiful thing you ever saw.
3. Write a short paragraph on the most enjoyable experience you ever had.
4. Recall and describe something which annoyed or vexed you, and explain why it did so.
5. Look out of the window for a few minutes, and then write a paragraph on what you have seen.
6. Study the personal and literary qualities of the following :—

#### MY SPECIAL HORSE.

*By a Farm Girl.*

Horses are friendly animals. They love human society—a cheery word, an affectionate caress. On our farm there is a grey pony which is my special chum. Very often we are sent on excursions together—to carry food to the sheep, rake up a hay field, or any other work that a girl and a horse can do. Sometimes we have our mid-day meal in the fields. Then, although I don't share his, Tommy, my workmate, insists on sharing my lunch.

He is very fond of bread or pastry, but he dislikes butter, jam, or cheese ; so I have to remove the inside of a sandwich and scrape the butter off the bread if I want to please him. Apples he loves, and carrots too. There is always one or the other in my overall coat pocket. He is not particular if the apples are ripe, or green and sour. So at present he gets the windfalls I pick up when passing through the orchard.

He likes sweets. Once I gave him a large lump of sticky toffee, then laughed until I cried at his efforts to manipulate it. He is a willing worker. He never seems to tire, just plods along, not very fast, but at a steady, even rate. But he likes to work alone. If we put him with another horse there are ructions all the time.

I never met such a horse as my grey Tommy is for getting untidy. I wonder if he is dissatisfied with his grey coat, and wishes it were a brown one, for he is always rolling about in the fields and getting it that colour. It is rather disheartening to get him respectable again, for I know it won't last long. Perhaps he does it because he likes to have me brush and curry him. He shuts his eyes when I am at work, but if I scrape a bit too hard sometimes he wakes up, squeals, and bites the manger. I hope he won't make a mistake some day and bite me !

JESSIE FREDERICK.

(From the "Daily News," with acknowledgments.)

**§ 5. Speak it out.**—It is a great help in composition to test a sentence by its sound before or after writing it down on paper. An incorrect sentence *sounds* wrong ; a rambling involved sentence offends the ear ; a sentence which is difficult to enunciate lacks charm in the reading. Lack of proper thought-sequence or misplacing of words is soon detected when a paragraph is read audibly. A poor or common style of writing is most readily shown up by the voice. Read over your paragraph when it is finished, and let your ear as well as your eye and mind teach you where to make corrections or improvements.

## EXERCISE II

1. Read over the following sentences audibly, and then try to improve them :—

(1) China has been out of the limelight of the newspapers lately.

(2) When we discuss the struggles of a world civilization to exist it is well now and then to give China a thought.

(3) Far too many papers were weak, some grossly weak, in spelling.

(4) All through the examination many candidates spent valuable time in ruling lines.

(5) There can hardly ever have been a more beautiful Easter season than that which sent the world out to the seashore, the fields, and the mountains a week ago.

2. Consider how far the charm or appeal of the following passages from famous essays depends upon their sound when read aloud :—

(1) I saw him in his old age and the decay of his faculties, palsy-smitten, in the last sad stage of human weakness—"a remnant most forlorn of what he was"—yet even then his eye would light up upon the mention of his favourite, Garrick. . . . At intervals, too, he would speak of his former life, and how he came up a little boy from Lincoln to go to service, and how his mother cried at parting with him, and how he returned, after some few years' absence, in his smart new livery to see her, and she blessed herself at the change, and could hardly be brought to believe that it was "her own bairn." And then, the excitement subsiding, he would weep, till I have wished that sad second-childhood might have a mother still to lay its head upon her lap. But the common mother of us all in no long time after received him gently into hers.

CHARLES LAMB.

(2) I no sooner saw this venerable man in the pulpit, but I very much approved of my friend's insisting upon the qualifications of a good aspect and a clear voice ; for I was so charmed with the gracefulness of his figure and

delivery, as well as with the discourses he pronounced, that I think I never passed any time more to my satisfaction. A sermon repeated after this manner, is like the composition of a poet in the mouth of a graceful actor. I could heartily wish that more of our country clergy would follow this example ; and instead of wasting their spirits in laborious compositions of their own, would endeavour after a handsome elocution and all those other talents that are proper to enforce what has been penned by greater masters. This would not only be more easy to themselves but more edifying to the people.

JOSEPH ADDISON.

(3) When I woke the next morning, it seemed as if all the events of the preceding evening had been a dream, and nothing but the identity of the ancient chamber convinced me of their reality. While I lay musing on my pillow, I heard the sound of little feet pattering outside of the door, and a whispering consultation. Presently a choir of small voices chanted forth an old Christmas carol, the burden of which was—

“ Rejoice, our Saviour he was born  
On Christmas day in the morning.”

I rose softly, slipped on my clothes, opened the door suddenly, and beheld one of the most beautiful little fairy groups that a painter could imagine. It consisted of a boy and two girls, the eldest not more than six, and lovely as seraphs. They were going the rounds of the house, and singing at every chamber door ; but my sudden appearance frightened them into mute bashfulness. They remained for a moment playing on their lips with their fingers, and now and then stealing a shy glance from under their eyebrows, until, as if by one impulse, they scampered away, and as they turned an angle of the gallery, I heard them laughing in triumph at their escape.

WASHINGTON IRVING.

3. Write a short paragraph on one or more of the following subjects :—

(1) A dog ; (2) a parrot well known to you ; (3) to-day's weather ; (4) a tennis ball ; (5) a cricket bat ; (6) your cap ; (7) a pair of scissors ; (8) the room in which you

are sitting ; (9) the view from your bedroom window ; (10) the sky to-day ; (11) a tree in your garden or by the side of a stream ; (12) a street lamp ; (13) a half-loaf in the gutter ; (14) Alfred the Great ; (15) your favourite hero in history or fiction ; (16) your favourite heroine in history or fiction ; (17) Sir Francis Drake.

4. Express in a single sentence the drift of each of the following paragraphs :—

(a) I was a mile from Thornfield, in a lane noted for wild roses in summer, for nuts and blackberries in autumn, and even now possessing a few coral treasures in hips and haws, but whose best winter delight lay in its utter solitude and leafless repose. If a breath of air stirred, it made no sound here ; for there was not a holly, not an evergreen to rustle, and the stripped hawthorn and hazel bushes were as still as the white, worn stones which causewayed the middle of the path. Far and wide, on each side, there were only fields, where no cattle now browsed ; and the little brown birds, which stirred occasionally in the hedge, looked like single russet leaves that had forgotten to drop.

CHARLOTTE BRONTË.

(b) The philosophers of King Charles's reign were busy on finding out the art of flying. The famous Bishop Wilkins was so confident of success in it, that he says he does not question but in the next age it will be as usual to hear a man call for his wings when he is going a journey, as it is now to call for his boots. The humour so prevailed among the virtuosos of this reign, that they were actually making parties to go up to the moon together, and were more put to it in their thought how to meet with accommodation by the way, than how to get thither.

JOSEPH ADDISON.

5. Continue each of the following so as to make a short paragraph :—

(a) Walking along an English country lane this morning, I noticed five birds . . .

(b) Cobb's farm stands half-way up a gently sloping hill . . .

(c) A sense of humour is helpful in many difficult moments . . .

(d) It is better to read one book carefully than to read seven in a hurry . . .

(e) London is not only the capital of England, but the centre of a world-wide Empire . . .

(f) A competence is better than great riches . . .

6. What subject interests you most at the present time? Write a short paragraph upon it.

7. Choose any paragraph from one of your English books and give it a title, for example:—

Reader, would'st thou know what peace and quiet mean; would'st thou find a refuge from the noises and clamours of the multitude; would'st thou enjoy at once solitude and society; would'st thou possess the depths of thine own spirit in stillness, without being shut out from the consolatory faces of thy species; would'st thou be alone and yet accompanied; solitary yet not desolate; singular, yet not without some one to keep thee in countenance; a unit in aggregate; a simple in composite: come with me into a Quakers' Meeting.

CHARLES LAMB.

The title of the above is obvious, being provided in the last three words. Take this title and write your own paragraph upon it.

8. Does Lamb repeat himself or become "redundant" in the above paragraph? If so, where? Give good reasons for your opinion.

9. Short stories or anecdotes make good paragraphs. Tell or write one which you have recently heard or read.

CHAPTER II.—ON BEGINNINGS AND  
ENDINGS

§ 6. “Well begun is half done.”—This proverb is only half true, but it will serve to emphasize the importance of beginnings—beginnings of sentences, beginnings of paragraphs, beginnings of themes. It is an interesting and helpful exercise to study the way in which various authors begin their writing. Let us look into the matter for a short time. The subject being proposed to the writer, how shall it be opened?

(1.) In the essay by Francis Bacon, printed on page 155, we have the direct opening, a plunge into the subject—

Travel in the younger sort is a part of education ; in the elder, a part of experience.

This direct method of opening arrests immediate attention, shutting out everything else from the reader’s mind but the subject proposed.

(2.) Steele’s essay on *Sir Roger de Coverley* (page 159) is equally direct—

The first of our society is a gentleman of Worcestershire, of ancient descent, a baronet, his name Sir Roger de Coverley.

(3.) Addison in his essay on *Household Superstitions* (page 160) does not begin in such a direct manner. He does not define superstition, but begins with an anecdote.

(4.) Goldsmith is more direct in his paper on

*London Tradesmen* (page 164). He begins by drawing attention to a similarity and then to a difference; a clever and striking beginning, showing Goldsmith's perfect command of his pen and his subject.

(5.) Cowper's letter on *Country Congregations* (page 166) is really an essay. It begins with a kind of query, as if he sat for a moment with pen upraised—“What shall I write about that will be interesting. Really, I don't know—but—” Then comes the real beginning—

I have lately visited some of the most distant parts of the kingdom with a clergyman of my acquaintance—

The mention of the clergyman suggests pews, but he will not trouble about them, though he could, no doubt, have written a highly entertaining paper on church pews—“seats of the mighty” and “free seats” and all the rest of it, for did he not write a long poem on *The Sofa*? But no, a clergyman is not complete without his people, so we get a paper on the congregations of country churches.

(6.) Lamb plunges affectionately into his subject (*The Praise of Chimney-Sweepers*, page 171), with his charming touch of the incongruous—

I like to meet a sweep—understand me—not a grown sweeper—old chimney-sweepers are by no means attractive—but one of those tender novices, blooming through their first nigritude.

Mark the “thrown-in” sentences between dashes and avoid them during your apprenticeship to writing. It takes a Lamb or a Goldsmith to manage them properly.

(7.) Leigh Hunt in *The Waiter* (page 179) begins as if he would say, “Have the goodness to observe that my subject is not ‘Waiters’ in general, but ‘The Waiter’ in particular. I have a type in my mind's

eye, and I'll describe him for you because I have seen and observed him (two different things)."

Going into the City the other day upon business, we took a chop at a tavern and renewed our acquaintance, after years of interruption, with that swift and untiring personage yclept a waiter.

Note that "yclept" for "called" or "known as" is permissible for Leigh Hunt, but would now only be used by a very poor journalist or by some one writing in fun.

(8.) We come to R. L. Stevenson on *Gas Lamps* (page 183), and seem to see him, cigarette in hand, pondering a moment—"Gas lamps, gas lamps! Lights, of course—city lamps—that shuts out the country—and, of course, only lighted when the sun has set.—Well, here goes."

Cities given, the problem was to light them. How to conduct individual citizens about the burgess-warren, when once heaven had withdrawn its leading luminary? or—since we live in a scientific age—when once our spinning planet has turned its back upon the sun.

This is perfectly clear, but not to be imitated by apprentices; for example, that "thrown-in" sentence after the interrogation mark is an ugly customer to handle except by a master.

### EXERCISE III

1. Take a book of essays and study the beginnings of about a dozen papers.
2. Write a paragraph summing up the observations you have made.
3. Write the beginning of a paper upon (1) The Policeman (*N.B.*, not "Policemen"); (2) In Praise of the Ass; (3) The Railway Station; (4) The

Bark of a Dog ; (5) A Cricket Bat ; (6) A Tennis Court ; (7) The Morning Newspaper ; (8) The Heel of a Shoe.

4. Think of something you would like to write about, and show how you would begin your theme.
5. Have you discovered any essays which begin with a definition ?
6. Do any of them begin with the title ?

**§ 7. Beginnings of Paragraphs.**—Having made a good beginning, the essayist writes in paragraphs of unequal length, each one having a definite central thought and coming to a conclusion when this thought has been fully developed, and the mind (as well as the voice) of the reader requires a pause for rest. These paragraphs also must be “well begun,” and their beginnings afford another interesting study.

Glance, first of all, down a number of essays, and find out whether any two adjacent paragraphs begin with the same words or phrases, neglecting such colourless words as *a*, *an*, or *the*.

Bacon repeats the phrase “Let him” in his essay on *Travel* (page 155), but it will be noticed that he is purposely repeating this phrase several times, taking care, however, to keep the repetitions some distance apart. Lamb begins several paragraphs with *I* (*Chimney-Sweepers*, page 171), a bad fault in an ordinary writer, but charming in Lamb, who cannot tell us too much about himself.

On the whole, there is studied variety in the beginnings of paragraphs, and this must be noted and acted upon in our own attempts at English writing.

#### EXERCISE IV

1. Choose a number of paragraphs from the essays on pages 155 to 189, and begin each one in a different manner from that adopted by the

author—for example, for “The things to be seen and observed . . .” we might have “Care must be taken not only to see, but also to study closely . . .” or, more simply, “We must not only see, but study closely. . . .”

2. Show how the beginning of the paragraph from the second onward connects in thought with the preceding paragraph—for example, in *Sir Roger de Coverley* (page 159), the beginning of the third paragraph, “However, *this humour* creates him no enemies,” connects with the description of Sir Roger’s singularity of behaviour mentioned in the second paragraph.
3. In these essays there are occasional self-contained paragraphs which can be lifted bodily out of the paper and stand by themselves. Indicate a few paragraphs of this kind.

§ 8. **Beginnings of Sentences.**—Read the following paragraph :—

*The young leading the young* is like the blind leading the blind ; “they will both fall into the ditch.” *The only sure guide* is he who has often gone the road which you want to go. *Let me be that guide*, who have gone all roads, and who can consequently point out to you the best. *If you ask me why I went any of the bad roads myself*, I will answer you very truly, that it was for want of a good guide ; *ill example invited me* one way, and a good guide was wanting to show me a better. *But if anybody*, capable of advising me, had taken the same pains with me, which I have taken, and will continue to take, with you, I should have avoided many follies and inconveniences, which undirected youth ran me into.

LORD CHESTERFIELD (1747).

Study carefully the beginnings of the sentences—their variety, the connection and sequence of thought, and the manner in which the words printed in italics

appear to summarize the whole of the paragraph. Try to discover a reason for the use of a semi-colon instead of a full stop between *good guide* and *ill example*.

*N.B.*—(1) It is not wise to imitate this writer by beginning a sentence with *But*. (2) The word *the* does not count as the real beginning of a sentence, but the Noun which follows it.

### EXERCISE V

Study the beginnings of the sentences in the following paragraphs from modern authors:—

(1) I have again and again taken up the pen to write to you, and many beginnings have gone into the waste-paper basket. And no doubt it requires some decision to break so long a silence. My health is vastly restored, and I am now living patriarchally in this place six hundred feet above the sea on the shoulder of a mountain of 1,500. Behind me, the unbroken bush slopes up to the backbone of the island without a house, with no inhabitants save a few runaway black boys, wild pigs and cattle, and wild doves and flying foxes, and many parti-coloured birds, and many black and many white: a very eerie, dim, strange place, and hard to travel. I am the head of a household of five whites, and of twelve Samoans, to all of whom I am the chief and father: my cook comes to me and asks leave to marry—and his mother, a fine old chief woman, who has never lived here, does the same. You may be sure I granted the petition. It is a life of great interest, complicated by the Tower of Babel, that old enemy. And I have all the time on my hands for literary work.

R. L. STEVENSON.

(2) My own thoughts kept me silent, and the Indian never opened his mouth. Like a statue he crouched by the tiller, with his sombre eyes looking to the sea. That night, when we had rounded Cape Henry in fine weather, we ran the sloop into a little bay below a headland, and made camp for the night beside a stream of cold water.

Next morning it blew hard from the north, and in a driving rain we crept down the Carolina coast.

JOHN BUCHAN.

(3) But woe to whoso touches the poor hives ! Keep away from the abodes of want ! Here, smoke has lost its spell, and you shall scarce have emitted the first puffs before twenty thousand acrid and enraged demons will dart from within the walls, overwhelm your hands, blind your eyes, and blacken your face. No living being, except, they say, the bear and the Sphinx Atropos, can resist the rage of the mailed legions. Above all, do not struggle : the fury would overtake the neighbouring colonies ; and the smell of the spilt venom would enrage all the republics around. There is no means of safety other than instant flight through the bushes. The bee is less rancorous, less implacable than the wasp, and rarely pursues her enemy. If flight be impossible, absolute immobility alone might calm her or put her off the scent. She fears and attacks any too sudden movement, but at once forgives that which no longer stirs.

MAURICE MAETERLINCK.

(4) The June morning was clear and brisk, but the air smelt of recent rain, and the river was running heavy over the weir. The old stones, which marked where, centuries before, a Roman bridge had stood, were covered by the flood, and showed like gleaming bosses under the rush of the river. Squared timber lay piled upon either bank, all oak from Windsor, but the new bridge was not yet begun. One hour after another the big ferry-boats took over horses and men. Only, of all that host, not a fifth passed the stream ; only the rich men and the more important of the clerks and the servants of either. All those whose rank entitled them to such an exhibition, and who were not already armed, put on their shirts of steel links and strapped on their heavy scabbarded swords before the crossing, and so crossed ready.

HILAIRE BELLOC.

(5) She addressed Mr. Gammon, who had seated himself on a corner of the table, as if to watch and listen. He was a short, thick-set man with dark, wiry hair roughened

into innumerable curls, and similar whiskers ending in a clean razor-line half-way down the cheek. His eyes were blue and had a wondering innocence, which seemed partly the result of facetious affectation, as also was the peculiar curve of his lips, ever ready for joke or laughter. Yet the broad, mobile countenance had lines of shrewdness and of strength, plain enough whenever it relapsed into gravity, and the rude shaping of jaw and chin might have warned any one disposed to take advantage of the man's good nature.

GEORGE GISSING.

§ 9. **Endings of Sentences.**—A sentence ought to end with strength, definition, and euphony. Consider the following :—

(1) He spoke of him as a grand old English gentleman, possessing the attributes of generosity and modesty, rare nowadays. *Daily Paper.*

This sentence ends badly, trailing off into the indefinite, and having a weak, halting sound when read aloud. Try the effect of—

He spoke of him as a grand old English gentleman, possessing the attributes, rare enough nowadays, of generosity and modesty.

(2) Remember me to all friends, and thank them for the trouble they have been at.

*Letter of the Young Pretender.*

Another weak ending ! As some one has said, “ A Preposition is a bad thing to end a sentence *with*.” It would be better to write “ for the trouble they have taken.”

(3) The Prince submitted with patience to his adverse fortune, was cheerful, and frequently desired those that were with him to be so.

Weak again ! How would you strengthen it ?

(4) Most of the men remained bare-headed in the breeze for the greater part of an hour, as the King himself and the Cabinet Ministers present also did.

*Daily Paper.*

How could you make the above end with the word Ministers? Note that so far Nouns appear to form the best endings, but this must not be taken as a rule.

(5) The month of May continues to behave like a spoilt child, bad-tempered storms being followed by alternate sunshine and tears. *Daily Paper.*

A good ending, strong, definite, and euphonious. Would "tears and sunshine" make a better ending, or is "sunshine and tears" more suitable to the dominant thought of the sentence?

(6) His old stud groom spoke of his late master with almost holy reverence. *Daily Paper.*

What is your opinion on this ending?

### EXERCISE VI

1. Examine critically some of the sentence-endings in the essays on pages 155 to 189. Test each ending by ear and mind.
2. The Romans said that the two most important words in a sentence were the first and the last, because by the first the attention is arrested, and on the last it rests. Is this true about the English sentence?
3. Note the strength of the sentence endings in the following:—

They rebelled against the words of *God*, therefore He brought them down in *labour*.

They fell *down*, and there was no *help*.

Then they cried unto the Lord in their *trouble*, and He delivered them out of their *distresses*.

Oh, that men would therefore praise the Lord for His *goodness*, and for His wonderful works to the children of *men*.

4. Study the endings of sentences in a few poetical extracts, remembering that the poet is not always free to make a strong ending, being checked by the requirements of metre, rhythm, and rhyme. But note how Shakespeare triumphs over these requirements :—

My gentle Puck, come hither.  
 Thou rememberest how once I sat upon a *promontory*,  
 And heard a mermaid on a dolphin's *back*  
 Uttering such dulcet and harmonious *tones*,  
 That the rude sea grew civil to her *song*,  
 And several stars shot madly from their *spheres*,  
 To hear the sea-maid's *music*.

5. Note the beauty and strength of the following ending to Dean Colet's book of grammar :—

Wherfore, I praye you, al lytel babys, all lytel chyldren lerne gladly.... Trustyng of this begynning that ye shal procede and growe to parfyt lyterature, and come at the last to be grete clarkes. And lyfte up your lytel whyte handes for me, whiche prayeth for you to God: to whom be all honour and glory. Amen.

## CHAPTER III.—ON JARGON, CIRCUMLOCUTION, AND PADDING

§ 10. **What is meant by Jargon.**—The dictionary defines the word in the following manner :—

**Jargon**, unintelligible words ; gibberish ; barbarous or debased language ; mode of speech full of unfamiliar terms.

This is not very helpful in connection with school composition, but it is enough to show that jargon, whatever it may be, is something to be avoided. When we have finished investigating the matter, we may come to the conclusion that jargon is the opposite of simple, straightforward language. Let us see.

Consider the sentence—

It was affirmed by those who saw him subsequent to his return to Australia that he had in no case renounced his adherence to primitive methods.

The writer seems to mean—

It was said by those who saw him after his return to Australia that he had not given up any of his primitive ways of living.

Now study the following example from *The Art of Writing*, by Professor Quiller-Couch :—

“ The Clerk of a Board of Guardians will minute that—

“ In the case of John Jenkins, deceased, the coffin provided was of the usual character.

“ Now this is not accurate. ‘ In the case of John Jenkins, deceased,’ for whom a coffin was supplied, it is wholly superfluous to tell us that he is deceased. But actually John Jenkins never had more than one case, and that was the coffin. The Clerk says he had two—a coffin in a case ; but I suspect the Clerk to be mistaken, and I am sure he errs in telling us that the coffin was of the usual character : for coffins have no character, usual or unusual. . . .

“ Have you begun to detect the two main vices of Jargon ? The first is that *it uses circumlocution* \* *rather than short, straight speech.* It says, ‘ In the case of John Jenkins, deceased, the coffin,’ when it means ‘ John Jenkins’s coffin.’ . . . The second vice is that *it habitually chooses vague woolly abstract nouns rather than concrete ones.* ”

### EXERCISE VII

Re-write the following sentences :—

- (a) In any case, let us send you a case of cigars on approval.
- (b) In most instances the players were below their form.
- (c) By means of his transparent or glass apparatus the conjurer performs, with the most wonderful volatility and artistic magical skill, a succession of indescribably clever experiments.
- (d) We look askance upon vast aggregations of populations, and we are inclined to believe that in comparatively small communities we find a healthier and more effective municipal life.
- (e) A bright spot in the year’s history is the negotiation of an arbitration between this country and the United States.
- (f) The whole round world and they that dwell therein dichotomize themselves naturally into those who drive a motor and those who do not.

\* That is to say, going round about a subject.

(g) The authorities have been requested to take action, if possible, to ameliorate the noises complained of.

(h) In America, where motor speed is not merely a problem but a menace, many means of mitigation have been tried, but perfection still eludes their grasp.

§ II. **Circumlocution.**—This is closely related to Jargon. It is “talking round” a subject, instead of talking about it in a simple, straightforward manner; saying, or writing, for example, that a man is “unmistakably under the influence of intoxicating liquor,” when we mean that he is “clearly drunk”; or that some one “called into requisition the services of the family medical attendant,” when we mean “sent for the doctor”; or that “his spirit quitted its earthly habitation and winged its way to eternity,” instead of “he died.” Sometimes there is a little excuse for the employment of a roundabout expression; as when the insurance agent tells you that “if anything happened to you” a good round sum would be payable to those whom you left behind, instead of speaking bluntly of your “death”; or a kindly critic speaks of some one as “not being quite all there,” instead of saying he is “a lunatic.” Indeed, the poets often take the roundabout way, and expect to be praised for “avoidance of the commonplace.” Tennyson speaks, for example, of the death of his friend Arthur Hallam in the following manner:—

In Vienna’s fatal walls,  
God’s finger touched him, and he slept.

This is beautiful, in its way, but we are not at present concerned with poetry, only with plain prose, which calls a spade a spade instead of “an agricultural implement, operated by the hand (and foot) of man,” or, if in post-war period, “of a land girl.”

## EXERCISE VIII

Re-write the following passages in more direct and simpler form :—

(a) The conflagration extended its devastating career until the whole of the doomed edifice was wrapped in a fierce mantle of devouring flame.

(b) He commenced his rejoinder by venturing the remark that his absence from the scene of the unfortunate accident prevented him from giving a considered and deliberate opinion on the circumstances which had contributed to the injury of the persons concerned in this regrettable affair.

(c) It is a matter for sincere and heartfelt regret that young individuals of the male persuasion should have no better means of spending their precious hours of ease than in following pursuits so trivial and productive of so much senseless clamour as engage their undivided attention whenever a half-day's cessation of labour falls to their lot.

(d) I beg to offer the remark, if I may be permitted to give a personal and individual opinion, that the pedestrian ought, in all justice and as a matter of fairness between man and man, to be protected against the reckless propulsion of mechanically driven vehicles along the highroads of this fair and liberty-loving land which we are proud to call our native country.

(e) There is, perhaps, no fault so vicious in those who professionally ply the weapon which, according to a well-known and highly esteemed poet, is mightier than the sword, as the meaningless accumulation of words and phrases that have little or no direct bearing upon the matter which the scribe is endeavouring to make clear to the intelligence of those who look to him and his " brothers of the pen " for light and leading in things of the mind.

(f) We have often had occasion to remark that Mr. — is one of the best known and most highly esteemed of the men of the younger generation of scientists who have consistently and unselfishly endeavoured to work with a single aim for the higher interests of their fellow-creatures.

§ 12. **Journalese and Padding.** — These are both

terms of reproach. The former has come to mean writing which is distinguished by jargon and circumlocution ; the latter means the unnecessary phrases and sentences which are used to "fill up" an article or report (and sometimes a school "essay"). Now, a journalist has to write against time and is given no chance of revision ; yet the experienced British journalist does not write journalese, nor does he pad, which is greatly to his credit. There are many journalists, however, who have not yet learnt their honourable business, and who are guilty of the use of jargon and circumlocution, for some of the examples in the foregoing exercise have been taken from newspapers published in various parts of the country. The experienced journalist (a) uses simple language ; (b) expresses himself directly ; (c) does not employ meaningless words, phrases, and sentences to "fill up" ; (d) does not hesitate to repeat a word when necessary.

### EXERCISE IX

1. How would you explain the difference (1) between good journalistic writing and literature ; (2) between good journalistic writing and journalese ?
2. What did the writer of the following sentence wish to convey to his readers ?—

The subtle cosmopolitan aroma of capital cities seemed to crystallize in the sunshine and put the *cachet* of metropolitan magnificence upon gloom-free London.

3. What is meant by each of the following, and what did the writer really wish to say ?—
  - (a) A large number of our Labour members began life at a very early age.
  - (b) The farmer of to-day is no simple Hodge with a

spade, a fork, a cart, a plough, and a wisp of straw in his mouth.

(c) The outlook for a speeding-up of the trouble between France and ourselves looks good, and this should do much to help trade.

(d) People were bathing until midnight in the moonlight.

(e) Mr. —— mentioned that he was the possessor of all the day books used by the Medicis, the great merchant princes of Florence. . . . He was now having those books translated by a fifteenth-century Italian scholar.

(f) At Othery, Somerset, a fox destroyed about fifty men and pullets. An organized attempt is to be made by local sportsmen to deal with Brer Fox.

(g) The cottages consist of three and four apartments each, and every dwelling will have a spacious bathroom.

(h) The tourists one and all were quite unable to find adequate expression for their amazement at the wonderful scenery of the rugged mountains and natural forest.

(i) In choosing the word " Reasonable " as a title we have in mind something more than the mere colloquial use of the word by which it is made synonymous with " Cheap."

(j) We beg to acknowledge your letter of the 7th inst., and thank you for your esteemed order for x quality plain blue linoleum at 4s. 6d. square yard, laid. This shall receive our best attention, and will be delivered and laid early next week.

(k) Miss ——'s style of writing reeks with cerebration, and at times is productive of distinct optical humidity.

4. Read the following : " Other factors, such as rickets or tuberculosis, must be taken into account, as any one of these will have an adverse influence on the case."

Now insert " adverse " somewhere in the first part of the sentence and say which words can then be left out altogether.

## CHAPTER IV.—ON THE PAUSE AND PUNCTUATION

§ 13. **Varied Pauses.**—The pause is one of the most eloquent things in English composition. It is made evident to the eye by the comma, dash, bracket, semi-colon, colon, full stop, and the space at the end of the paragraph ; and the careful reader makes a different kind of pause at each. There is a slight pause at the comma, while the voice is not allowed to drop ; a rather longer pause at the semi-colon, with a slight drop of the voice ; a little more definite pause and drop at the colon, which is almost, but not quite, equivalent to the full stop. The pause and drop of the voice at the full stop is very definite, but not so marked as at the end of the paragraph. When the dash or bracket occurs, there is a pause of suspension, while the voice is kept up and touches lightly in a kind of aside upon the phrase or sentence, which forms a kind of “throw-in,” often very effective, in the composition.

§ 14. **A Study of Pauses (Thackeray).**—Consider the following extract from one of Thackeray’s lighter papers. Miss Tickletoby is lecturing on English history to her private school. The passage ought to be read aloud very deliberately.

How first our island became inhabited is a point which nobody knows. I do not believe a word of that story at the beginning of the *Seven Champions of Christendom*, about King Brute and his companions ; and as for the other hypotheses (let Miss Biggs spell the word “hypothesis,”) and remember not to con-

found it with “apothecary”), they are not worth consideration. For as the first man who entered the island could not write, depend on it he never set down the date of his arrival ; and I leave you to guess what a confusion about dates there would speedily be—you who can’t remember whether it was last Thursday or Friday that you had gooseberry pudding for dinner.

Those little dears who have not seen Mrs. Trimmer’s *History of England* have no doubt beheld pictures of Mr. Oldridge’s Balm of Columbia. The ancient Britons were like the lady represented there, only not black ; the excellent Mrs. T.’s picture of these no doubt are authentic, and there our ancestors are represented as dressed in painted skins, and wearing their hair as long as possible. I need not say that it was their own skins they painted, because, as for clothes, they were not yet invented. W. M. THACKERAY.

Now the critical reader must feel that the printer does not satisfy all his needs with regard to pauses, while he has one too many signs after “apothecary.” The present writer feels that he must pause slightly after “inhabited,” and still more slightly after “point”; also after “story,” “For,” “island,” “it,” “guess,” “dates,” “remember,” “Friday,” “dears,” “England,” “represented,” and “say.” It is impossible to make rules about this matter. One writer of distinction says that, in reading, we should disregard the printer’s marks, and pause when we see a picture—for example :—

The field | is the world | the good seed | are the children of the kingdom | but the tares | are the children of the wicked one | the enemy that sowed them | is the devil | the harvest | is the end of the world | and the reapers | are the angels.

This idea might be critically tested with a few other passages.

§ 15. Another Study of Pauses (Charles Lamb).— Consider the following :—

Now Barbara's weekly stipend was a bare half-guinea.—By mistake he popped into her hand—a whole one.

Barbara tripped away.

She was entirely unconscious at first of the mistake: God knows, Ravenscroft would never have discovered it.

But when she had got down to the first of those uncouth landing-places, she became sensible of an unusual weight of metal pressing in her little hand.

Now mark the dilemma.

She was by nature a good child. From her parents and those about her, she had imbibed no contrary influence. But then they had taught her nothing. Poor men's smoky cabins are not always porticoes of moral philosophy. This little maid had no instinct to evil, but then she might be said to have no fixed principle. She had heard honesty commended, but never dreamed of its application to herself. She thought of it as something which concerned grown-up people, men and women. She had never known temptation, or thought of preparing resistance against it.

A noteworthy point about this passage is the shortness of the paragraphs in the first part. If they were run together into one, the pauses at the end of each would not be long enough.

The dashes near the beginning of the extract do not indicate a throw-in, but allow the author to end the sentence with a phrase which is not only the most important expression in the sentence, but also balances the "half-guinea" of the preceding sentence.

Notice, too, the balance of the third paragraph—She—Ravenscroft; the use of a colon instead of a full stop, which would separate the two portions too sharply.

But the most effective touch of all is the shortness of the fifth paragraph.

## EXERCISE X

Study and comment upon the pauses in the following extracts :—

(1) I am just returned from Westminster Abbey, the place of sepulture for the philosophers, heroes, and kings of England. What a gloom do monumental inscriptions and all the venerable remains of deceased merit inspire ! Imagine a temple marked with the hand of antiquity, solemn as religious awe, adorned with all the magnificence of barbarous profusion, dim windows, fretted pillars, long colonnades, and dark ceilings. Think, then, what were my sensations at being introduced to such a scene. I stood in the midst of the temple, and threw my eyes round the walls filled with the statues, the inscriptions, and the monuments of the dead.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

(2) I venerate an honest obliquity of understanding. The more laughable blunders a man shall commit in your company, the more tests he giveth you, that he will not betray or overreach you. I love the safety which a palpable hallucination warrants ; the security, which a word out of season ratifies. And take my word for this, reader, and say a fool told it you, if you please, that he who hath not a dram of folly in his mixture, hath pounds of much worse matter in his composition. It is observed, that “ the foolisher the fowl or fish,—woodcocks,—dotterels,—cods’-heads, etc., the finer the flesh thereof,” and what are commonly the world’s received fools but such whereof the world is not worthy ? and what have been some of the kindest patterns of our species, but so many darlings of absurdity, minions of the goddess, and her white boys ? —Reader, if you wrest my words beyond their fair construction, it is you, and not I, that are the *April Fool*.

CHARLES LAMB.

(3) It was really delightful to see the old squire seated in his hereditary elbow chair, by the hospitable fireplace of his ancestors, and looking around him like the sun of a system, beaming warmth and gladness to every heart. Even the very dog that lay stretched at his feet, as he

lazily shifted his position and yawned, would look fondly up in his master's face, wag his tail against the floor, and stretch himself again to sleep, confident of kindness and protection. There is an emanation from the heart in genuine hospitality which cannot be described, but is immediately felt, and puts the stranger at once at his ease. I had not been seated many minutes by the comfortable hearth of the worthy old cavalier, before I found myself as much at home as if I had been one of the family.

WASHINGTON IRVING.

(4) Irving had such a small house and such narrow rooms, because there was a great number of people to occupy them. He could only afford to keep one old horse (which, lazy and aged as it was, managed once or twice to run away with that careless old horseman). He could only afford to give plain sherry to that amiable British paragraph-monger from New York, who saw the patriarch asleep over his modest, blameless cup, and fetched the public into his private chamber to look at him. Irving could only live very modestly, because the wifeless, childless man had a number of children to whom he was as a father. He had as many as nine nieces, I am told—I saw two of these ladies at his house—with all of whom the dear old man had shared the produce of his labour and genius.

W. M. THACKERAY.

(5) In addition to a provoking short-sightedness (the effect of late studies and watchings at the midnight oil) D. is the most absent of men. He made a call the other morning at our friend M.'s in Bedford Square ; and, finding nobody at home, was ushered into the hall, where, asking for pen and ink, with great exactitude of purpose he enters me his name in the book—which ordinarily lies about in such places, to record the failures of the untimely or unfortunate visitor—and takes his leave with many ceremonies, and professions of regret. Some two or three hours after, his walking destinies returned him into the same neighbourhood again, and again the quiet image of the fireside circle at M.'s—Mrs. M. presiding at it like a Queen Lar, with pretty A. S. at her side—striking irresistibly on his fancy, he makes another call (forgetting that they were “certainly not to return from the country before that day week”), and disappointed a second time,

inquires for pen and paper as before : again the book is brought, and in the line just above that in which he is about to print his second name (his re-script)—his first name (scarce dry) looks out upon him like another Sosia, or as if a man should suddenly encounter his own duplicate !—The effect may be conceived. D. made many a good resolution against any such lapses in future. I hope he will not keep them too rigorously.

CHARLES LAMB.

(6) Urthred spoke quietly and clearly. “ You Earthlings are difficult guests to entertain. This is not all. . . . Manifestly this man’s mind is very unclean. His imagination is evidently inflamed and diseased. He is angry, and anxious to insult and wound. And his noises are terrific. To-morrow he must be examined and dealt with.”

“ How ? ” said Father Amerton, his round face suddenly grey. “ How do you mean—*dealt with* ? ”

“ *Please* do not talk,” said Mr. Burleigh. “ *Please* do not talk any more. You have done quite enough mischief. . . .”

H. G. WELLS.

(7) Parishioners dropped in by twos and threes, deposited themselves in rows before her, rested three-quarters of a minute on their foreheads as if they were praying, though they were not ; then sat up and looked around. When the chants came on one of her favourites happened to be chosen among the rest—the old double chant “ Langdon ”—but she did not know what it was called, though she would much have liked to know. She thought, without exactly wording the thought, how strange and godlike was a composer’s power, who from the grave could lead through sequences of emotion, which he alone had felt at first, a girl like her who had never heard of his name, and never would have a clue to his personality.

THOMAS HARDY.

(8) I met a lady the other day who had travelled much and seen much, and who talked with great vivacity about her experiences. But I noticed one peculiarity about her. If I happened to say that I too had been, let us say, to Tangier, her interest in Tangier immediately faded away, and she switched the conversation on to, let us say,

Cairo, where I had not been, and where therefore she was quite happy. And her enthusiasm about the Honble. Ulick de Tompkins vanished when she found that I had had the honour of meeting that eminent personage. And so with books and curiosities, places and things—she was only interested in them so long as they were her exclusive possession.

A. G. GARDINER.

**§ 16. Rules for Punctuation.**—It is not easy to deduce rules\* for the use of the various “points” which denote pauses in English writing. To a great extent the sense of the piece must decide. In addition to the marks already noted, the printer uses the Note of Interrogation (?), the Note of Exclamation or Admiration (!), and Inverted or Raised Commas (“ ” or ‘ ’), while some modern writers now use three or more dots (see No. 6 on the opposite page) to note a pause for ruminatation.

(1.) Of the above signs the use of the **Note of Interrogation** is obvious. It is an ugly mark, and when a word of interrogation is used, such as *When*, *Where*, etc., or the sentence is inverted, as in *Is it peace*, the use of the Query Mark appears to be unnecessary. No one could mistake the sense of

And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou.

It is wise, however, for the student to follow convention by using the Query Mark after each direct question.

(2.) **Quotation Marks** are also omitted from the above Biblical quotation, and the omission does not impair the sense of the sentence. These marks are also very ugly and break up a page of printed matter.

\* In the earliest printed books the only punctuation marks employed were the period or full stop, and an oblique mark thus (/), indicating a secondary pause. But the first book printed in Italy by Sweynheim and Pannartz, used also the colon and note of interrogation. Aldus Manutius, the famous printer of Venice (1450–1515), introduced a fuller system of punctuation, which became the basis of our present method.

Consider the following passage in which they are not used :—

She is so well off—better than any of us, Susan Dewy was saying. Her father farms five hundred acres, and she might marry a doctor, or curate, or anything of that kind if she contrived a little.

THOMAS HARDY.

A quick and somewhat inattentive reader might mistake the latter part of this paragraph for a description of Susan in spite of the Present Tense, and the use of Quotation Marks makes it quite clear that Susan spoke the words from “Her father” to “a little.” Note the broken quotation in the following :—

“ And father has not only told Mr. Shinar that,” continued Fancy, “ but he has written me a letter, to say he should wish me to encourage Mr. Shinar, if ‘twas convenient ! ”

The single Quotation Marks (‘ ’) are used when a speaker makes a quotation—for example :—

“ It means ‘ given of God,’ ” said Robert seriously.  
“ If the Lord says ‘ Speak ! ’ can I hold my tongue ? ”

Some authors, however, including the novelist Thomas Hardy, use the single quotes first and the double commas for a quotation within a speech.

(3.) The **Mark of Exclamation** is used after Interjections such as *Hark ! Alas ! Oh, dear !* and after exclamatory words, phrases, or sentences which make the reader, as it were, open his eyes or raise his eyebrows in surprise, or which form a greeting or invocation—for example :—

“ Here’s luck to you, little brother ! ”

Now virtue support Barbara !

Antiquity ! thou wondrous charm, what art thou ?  
that, being nothing, art everything !

How often have I put off writing a letter till it was  
too late !

In correspondence the sign is often used to show that a kind of joke is intended.

It is to be noted that the voice of the reader rises at a Note of Exclamation even when it takes the place of a full stop at the end of a sentence—for example:—

How often have I had to run after the postman with a letter—now missing, now recovering the sound of his bell—breathless, angry with myself—then hearing the welcome sound come full round a corner—and seeing the scarlet costume which sets all my fears and self-reproaches at rest !

(4.) The **Full Stop**, or Period, is used at the end of a sentence, and is followed by a capital letter. It denotes a very definite pause, and, as a rule, marks a point where the reader's voice is allowed to drop.

We do not find many paragraphs in good English writing made up of short sentences, each ending with a full stop ; but sentences of this kind can be used very effectively.

A comely brood are the Brutons. Six of them, females, were noted as the handsomest young women in the county. But this adopted Bruton, in my mind, was better than they all—more comely. She was born too late to have remembered me. She just recollects in early life to have had her cousin Bridget once pointed out to her, climbing a stile. But the name of kindred and of cousinship was enough.

CHARLES LAMB.

The short, or comparatively short, simple sentence gives a succinct, incisive effect, and is very useful in describing somewhat breathless happenings, where one thing succeeds another in quick succession. Study the following :—

The whole three rushed on the king at once. Bruce was on horseback, in the strait pass we have described, betwixt a precipitous rock and a deep lake. He struck the first man, who came up and seized his

horse's rein, such a blow with his sword as cut off his hand and freed the bridle. The man bled to death. The other brother had grasped Bruce in the meantime by the leg, and was attempting to throw him from horseback. The king, setting spurs to his horse, made the animal suddenly spring forward, so that the Highlander fell under his feet, and as he was endeavouring to rise again Bruce cleaved his head in two with his sword.

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

The greater length of the last sentence suits the story exactly, for it describes not a single blow or other movement, but several quick stages in the combat, which were closely connected so as to form a linked series. It will be noticed that there are no semi-colons or colons in the paragraph.

(5.) The **Semi-colon** is the most useful of all the marks of punctuation, and the most difficult to use adequately. It is interesting and helpful to study a few pages of standard literature, considering where and why each semi-colon is used. Here are a few short passages showing the varied uses of this sign:—

(1) The sharp touches of the chisel are gone from the rich tracery of the arches ; the roses which adorned the key-stones have lost their leafy beauty ; everything bears marks of the gradual dilapidations of time, which yet has something pleasing in its very decay.

WASHINGTON IRVING.

Try the effect of a full stop in place of each semi-colon in the above, as well as in the following :—

(2) We hold these truths to be self-evident : that all men are created equal ; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights ; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

*Declaration of Independence.*

Why is a colon used after " self-evident " ?

(3) The martyr cannot be dishonoured ; every lash inflicted is a tongue of fame ; every prison a

more illustrious abode ; every burned book or house enlightens the world ; every suppressed or expunged word reverberates through the earth from side to side.

R. W. EMERSON.

Note how the word in heavy type dominates the paragraph and links all the sentences together in thought.

(4) We thank Thee for the place in which we dwell ; for the love that unites us ; for the peace accorded us this day ; for the hope with which we expect the morrow ; for the health, the work, the food, and the bright skies that make our life delightful ; for our friends in all parts of the earth.

R. L. STEVENSON.

Study the effect of replacing each semi-colon in this passage with a comma.

(6.) The Colon is somewhat rarely used, especially in modern writing. Ask yourself why it is used in certain places in the following paragraphs, and whether, in each case, the semi-colon would have served the purpose equally well.

(1) My toothache is in a great measure, that is to say, almost entirely removed : not by snipping my ears, as poor Lady Strange's ears were snipped, nor by any other chirurgical operations, except such as I could perform myself. WILLIAM COWPER.

(2) We can only judge by the circumstances under which actions are performed, whether they are due to instinct, or to reason, or to the mere association of ideas : this latter principle, however, is intimately connected with reason. CHARLES DARWIN.

(3) Why do the heathen so furiously rage together : and why do the people imagine a vain thing ?

O Lord, rebuke me not in thine indignation : neither chasten me in thy displeasure. *Psalms.*

[N.B.—This “ pointing ” of the Psalms has as much to do with music as with literary punctuation, as is

proved by the verse—For the righteous God : trieth the very hearts and reins.]

(4) Old George showed no such Royal splendour. He used to give a guinea sometimes : sometimes feel in his pockets and find he had no money : often ask a man a hundred questions : about the number of his family, about his oats and beans, about the rent he paid for his house ; and ride on.

W. M. THACKERAY.

On the whole, we must conclude that good writers use the semi-colon, and very occasionally the colon, (1) to prevent the use of short, abrupt complete sentences, each concluding with a full stop ; (2) to prevent the use of over-long, gasping sentences, peppered with commas (a too common fault of school and college composition).

(7.) The **Comma** is a kind of makeshift. It is used in printed matter according to a convention or rule, not very well defined, but it has no very close relation to the pauses made by a good reader, who is guided by the sense of the passage he is reading. On the other hand, it is often useful in making clear the sense of a passage which must be quickly read. We have not time to be continually weighing the sense of what we read, and occasionally a comma or its absence makes a great deal of difference ; but this is not often the case in good composition, as you can readily test for yourselves by a little careful study.

Study the commas in the following paragraphs, and mark the places where you would make a pause in oral reading although no comma is used ; also those places where you would pause so slightly that a comma does not appear to be required. Remember that it is not certain that these commas were used by the writers, but that they were inserted according to the useful rules followed in printing offices.

(1) As soon as the sermon is finished, nobody presumes to stir till Sir Roger is gone out of the church. The knight walks down from his seat in the chancel between a double row of his tenants, that stand bowing to him on each side ; and every now and then inquires how such an one's wife, or mother, or son, or father do, whom he does not see at church ; which is understood as a secret reprimand to the person that is absent.

JOSEPH ADDISON.

(2) Leaving this part of the temple, we made up to an iron gate, through which my companion told me we were to pass, in order to see the monuments of the kings. Accordingly, I marched up without further ceremony, and was going to enter, when a person who held the gate in his hand told me I must pay first.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

(3) He was no dangler in the common acceptation of the word, after women ; but he reverenced and upheld, in every form in which it came before him, *womanhood*. I have seen him—nay, smile not—tenderly escorting a market-woman, whom he had encountered in a shower, exalting his umbrella over her poor basket of fruit, that it might receive no damage, with as much carefulness as if she had been a countess. To the reverend form of Female Eld he would yield the wall (though it were to an ancient beggar-woman) with more ceremony than we can afford to show our grandams.

CHARLES LAMB.

(4) Complaints are frequently made of the vanity and shortness of human life, when, if we examine its smallest details, they present a world by themselves. The most trifling objects, retraced with the eye of memory, assume the vividness, the delicacy, and importance of insects seen through a magnifying glass.

WILLIAM HAZLITT.

(5) Now, then, to commence.—But first, the reader who is good-natured enough to have a regard for these papers, may choose to be told of the origin of the use of this word Now, in case he is not already acquainted with it. It was suggested to us by the

striking convenience it affords to descriptive writers, such as Thompson and others, who are fond of beginning their paragraphs with it, thereby saving themselves a world of trouble in bringing about a nicer conjunction of the various parts of their subject.

LEIGH HUNT.

(6) As the coach rattles through the village, every one runs to the window, and you have glances on every side of fresh country faces and blooming giggling girls. At the corners are assembled juntos of village idlers and wise men, who take their stations there for the important purpose of seeing company pass ; but the sagest knot is generally at the blacksmith's, to whom the passing of the coach is an event fruitful of much speculation.

WASHINGTON IRVING.

(7) If a company of giants were got together, very likely one or two of the mere six-feet-six people might be angry at the incontestable superiority of the very tallest of the party : and so I have heard some London wits, rather peevish at Macaulay's superiority, complain that he occupied too much of the talk, and so forth. Now that wonderful tongue is to speak no more, will not many a man grieve that he no longer has the chance to listen ?

W. M. THACKERAY.

(8) The family, like the home in which they live, needs to be kept in repair, lest some little rift in the walls should appear and let in the wind and the rain. The happiness of a family depends very much on attention to little things. Order, comfort, regularity, cheerfulness, good taste, pleasant conversation—these are the ornaments of daily life, deprived of which it degenerates into a wearisome routine.

BENJAMIN JOWETT

## EXERCISE XI

1. Formulate a few rules for the use of the comma, using the above and other literary passages.

2. Why would it be inadvisable to insert a comma at every point where a good reader would pause?
3. Insert punctuation marks in the following passages:—

(1) After an imprisonment of several years we heard somebody knocking at our chest and breaking it open with a hammer This we found was the old man's heir who as his father lay a-dying was so good as to come to our release he separated us that very day What was the fate of my companions I know not as for myself I was sent to the apothecary's shop for a pint of sack The apothecary gave me to an herb-woman the herb-woman to a butcher the butcher to a brewer and the brewer to his wife who made a present of me to a preacher After this manner I made my way merrily through the world for as I told you before we shillings love nothing so much as travelling

JOSEPH ADDISON.

(2) He now therefore assumed a look of importance and in an angry tone began to examine the sailor demanding in what engagement he was thus disabled and rendered unfit for service The sailor replied in a tone as angrily as he that he had been an officer on board a private ship of war and that he had lost his leg aboard in defence of those who did nothing at home At this reply all my friend's importance vanished in a moment he had not a single question more to ask he now only studied what method he should take to relieve him unobserved

OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

(3) The fatted calf was made ready or rather was already so as if in anticipation of our coming and after an appropriate glass of native wine never let me forget with what honest pride this hospitable cousin made us proceed to Wheathampstead to introduce us as some new-found rarity to her mother and sister Gladmans who did indeed know something more of us at a time when she almost knew nothing

CHARLES LAMB.

(4) I had not been long at the inn when a post-chaise drove up to the door. A young gentleman stepped out and by the light of the lamps I caught a glimpse of a countenance which I thought I knew. I moved forward to get a nearer view when his eye caught mine. I was not mistaken; it was Frank Bracebridge, a sprightly good-humoured young fellow with whom I had once travelled on the Continent. Our meeting was extremely cordial for the countenance of an old fellow-traveller always brings up the recollection of a thousand pleasant scenes, odd adventures and excellent jokes.

WASHINGTON IRVING.

(5) Alfred came to the throne after his three brothers and you all know how good and famous a king he was. It is said that his father indulged him and that he did not know how to read until he was twelve years old; but this, my dears, I cannot believe or at least I cannot but regret that there were no nice day-schools then where children might be taught to read before they were twelve or ten or even eight years old, as many of my dear scholars can.

W. M. THACKERAY.

(6) By the side of the stream she was coming to me even among the primroses as if she loved them all and every flower looked the brighter as her eyes shone on them. I could not see what her face was, my heart so awoke and trembled only that her hair was flowing from a wreath of white violets and the grace of her coming was like the appearance of the first wind-flower. The pale gleam over the western cliffs threw a shadow of light behind her as if the sun were lingering.

R. D. BLACKMORE.

[*N.B.—In writing English try, as far as you can, to make the form of your sentences express the sense without the aid of punctuation.*]

## CHAPTER V.—THE WRITER AND THE READER

§ 17. “**Le style est l’homme.**”—Every essayist worthy of the name has a method of writing or style of his own. It is misleading, however, to say that one writer has a terse or succinct style, another a conversational or intimate style, a third a homely style; for the style of any essayist’s writing cannot be summed up in a single adjective. His style is the expression of himself. It shows how he looks at the world and his own place in the world, and it also shows his attitude towards his reader.

True essay writing is very largely a matter of communication, or at least attempted communication, between two persons, the writer and the reader. If there is no personal sympathy between the two the communication is not made, the essayist does not, as actors put it, “get it across”—that is, across the foot-lights. This, of course, may be, and usually is, the fault, or the misfortune, of the reader; and when the latter says that he “does not like So-and-so’s essays,” he means that he is not in sympathy with the man behind the pen.

If, therefore, we set out to study an essayist’s “style” we are really embarking on a voyage of discovery with regard to the essayist himself; for his style *is* himself, or, as the French express it with national neatness, *Le style est l’homme.*

We might, indeed, go a step farther and say that no writer has ever won real distinction as an essayist who has not more or less unconsciously created a pen-portrait of himself. He does not set out to do

this—if he did he would most certainly fail ; but in his manner of writing he reveals to a discerning reader his own likes and dislikes, his opinions and prejudices—in a word, his own personality.

There are, moreover, as many styles as there are competent or accepted essayists, and it is impossible to define or explain fully any essayist's style. Nor can any one imitate exactly the style of another, or, as R. L. Stevenson put it, become the " sedulous ape " of another man. If the imitator has any personality of his own, it is certain to break through.

**§ 18. A Few Examples.**—In each of the essays given on pages 155 to 189 there is a definite personality behind the writing ; this is the reason why the papers belong to standard literature, why they are read and studied again and again, why they will not be allowed to die.

Study them again, one by one, with the above thought in your mind, and try in each case to estimate the character of the writer. For example :—

BACON in his essays *Of Travel* and *Of Studies* appears to be a cool, detached thinker ; he is sure of his opinion, and may even be said to " lay down the law " (he *was* a lawyer and a judge) ; he is not concerned to win the affection of his reader, but has so much common-sense that he wins his general approval ; he is more than a little worldly-wise, and is not likely to make mistakes through generosity or to " give himself away " ; he leaves his reader impressed with his cleverness, his skilful use of language (here is no Jargon !), and his power of packing a great deal of meaning into a few well-chosen words, but he is rather cold !

RICHARD STEELE in his *Sir Roger de Coverley* is almost as concise as Bacon. In very few words (no Jargon here either !) he gives us a full-length portrait. No, that is wrong, for he does much more : he creates a living man and a lovable man as Bacon could never

do, and for this reason, that he was himself both living and lovable. You smile gently at his Sir Roger, but you do not laugh at him. You will find when you come to read more about Steele that there is a great deal of himself in Sir Roger. Bacon sits opposite to his reader, with his forefinger upheld, but Steele stands by his side with his hand on his shoulder and says with a quiet smile, “Now look at that!”

JOSEPH ADDISON in his *Household Superstitions* is somewhat graver than Steele, but not so severe as Bacon. He does not “lay down the law,” but conveys the idea that he wants to gain the reader’s sympathy by the common-sense and humanity of his own opinions; in a word, he is persuasive. His sentences are neither too short nor too long. He can rise to great eloquence and can make a magnificent conclusion. The reader lays down his essays with the feeling that he has gained a somewhat sober friend.

Take each of the other essays in turn, and try not only to find the man behind the writing, but also to discover how he is regarding you.

§ 19. **The Lesson for Essay Writers.**—It is clear that *the good essayist presupposes the reader*, and writes to communicate ideas rather than to make statements or challenge contradiction; and thereby hangs a tale which will drive home my point. An old editor has related how he taught one of his young men to write clearly. The youth had good abilities, but everything he wrote was confused and opaque, and no amount of advice seemed to do him good. At last the editor said, “You must really do better. Now just you take this paragraph back and imagine that you have sitting in front of you the stupidest man in the kingdom; then *tell him in the simplest and clearest way you can* what to put in the paragraph; and when you think you have made him understand, write down as clearly as possible what you said to him.”

The youth went away sadly, but an hour later he returned with his revised version. It was a clear and forcible piece of writing. "Capital!" said the editor. "How did you manage to do it?" "Well, sir, I did what you told me. I sat down at the desk and fancied that you were sitting opposite me."

Note that the editor advised telling before writing. The advice was particularly good. As we have already agreed, the sound is excellent for the interpretation of the sense. Say it first, then write it down, then test it again by reading it aloud. There are few good writers who do not whisper to themselves as they write, and when next you hear someone talking to himself do not inform the nearest policeman, for he is not necessarily a danger to the community. Wordsworth spoke his verses to himself in the roads and fields round Grasmere. The country folk used to say he "boomed," and thought he was mad; but then a jealous general once said Wolfe was mad, and George III. is said to have retorted, "Mad, is he; then I wish he would bite some of you." The story is quite good enough to be sober history, which always solemnly pretends to be true.

## EXERCISE XII

### I. Read the following very carefully:—

Epping police were very much hurt, not to say annoyed, at a stone-throwing "incident" shortly before midnight yesterday.

The son of a local hotel-keeper, while walking with his sister and a friend in St. John's Road, was struck with a stone. He stepped into the road to investigate, but had to retire before a heavy bombardment.

Soon P.C. B——e appeared on the scene, and he proceeded to investigate by flashing his electric lamp along the sides of the road. Unconsciously he transformed himself into a target, and as a large stone flashed past his head he promptly switched off the lamp.

Another constable arrived, and he, too, had to dodge the fusillade of stones.

Windows all around them were broken while they endeavoured to discover where the stones came from.

The position—from the police point of view—became hopeless, and the officers whistled for assistance.

A force of police, in charge of an inspector, arrived, and in the intervals of dodging the stones they searched the neighbourhood.

The bombardment showed no signs of decreasing in intensity, and a crowd of people, attracted by the police whistles, and the flashing of lamps, gathered at the spot.

Many people were struck by stones, and it was not until five o'clock this morning that the one-sided battle ceased.

It was found that the stones had been taken from a rockery in a doctor's garden, but nobody could be found there.

Nobody, in fact, who could have thrown the stones was found, and the mystery is still unsolved.

(a) Can you discover any padding, journalese, or jargon in this newspaper account?

(b) Imagine that you were one of the witnesses of the incident. Tell the story in the first person as to a friend who was not on the spot.

(c) Imagine yourself P.C. B—e, and tell the story from his point of view, or as he might have reported the occurrence, to his superior officer.

(d) Add to each version of the story some explanation of the affair which may have occurred to you or to P.C. B—e.

(e) Make suggestions for dealing with the situation.

2. Read the following:—

The scientist Pavlov kept nine white mice. They were fed once a day, and each time food was put into their cages an electric bell was rung. It required 300 lessons to impress on these nine the meaning of the ringing of the bell. When, however, a first "filial" generation of mice was bred from them, 100 lessons sufficed to teach these younger mice to seek their food when the bell sounded.

In the second filial generation this result was accom-

plished in 30 lessons, and in the third filial generation in five lessons.

(a) Re-tell this "story" as if to a friend who is interested in animals.

(b) Add an inference, lesson, or conclusion to your story, enlarging upon it as much as you please.

3. Read and study the following poem :—

### THE SHIP OF SPRING

Last night the wind went sweet south-west,  
Rocking and singing the world to rest.  
But when the meadow floor was dark,  
Up in the sunset sang the lark,  
Calling across the cloudy hills  
To the wind—the merry wind that fills  
Betimes, or lazy lingering,  
The magic sail that bears the Spring.

Over the hills the call was heard,  
Ripples ran as the land-wind stirred  
In southern havens white and clear,  
Where April slumbers half the year ;  
And a fairy ship in a sapphire bay  
Slipped her cable and stood away  
Into the North, that lies so far ;  
As she dipped to the surge we thought her a star  
Dipping under a sunset bar.

For she is a ship of the sky, and rides  
Still to the set of the airy tides.  
The little white moon betwixt her shrouds  
Silvers the spray of the tumbling clouds ;  
In halcyon watches her keelson creeps  
From belt to belt of the starry deeps,  
Till the broad red moon at set shall stoop  
To hang for a lantern on her poop.

An hour ere the day-star raised her flame,  
Into the happiest vale she came ;  
And down the warm soft-blown dark  
Dropped with music the magic bark ;

Slid by woodland, wharf, and quay,  
 Where primrose companies stood to see,  
 Furled her sails like a mist uprolled,  
 And moored where a reef of cowslips shoaled.

Then they unloaded her merchandise ;  
 Tossed from the hatches clouds of spice,  
 That drifted away through holt and lane ;  
 Next they flung from the hold, like rain,  
 Jacinth, emerald, amethyst ;  
 And the woodland turned, where the shower kist,  
 Purple under a greening mist.

Then they opened a thousand bales,  
 Each of a thousand Bagdad frails,  
 Each of a thousand nightingales.

Next, from silken sacks untied,  
 They shook the cuckoos over the side ;  
 And tenderly loosed from crystal coops  
 Butterfly squadrons and moths by troops ;  
 The dawn on the dew was coming grey  
 When the last of the swallows was sent away.

And when the hold was empty and clear,  
 The ship sailed back till another year ;  
 But only Alice, who woke at dawn  
 To hear the cuckoo across the lawn,  
 Saw in the sunrise rose and grey  
 A sail like a rose-leaf far away,  
 And waved, at her window lingering,  
 Good-bye to the ship that brought the Spring.\*

This is a pretty fancy of a poet, a kind of allegory of the coming of Spring. Suppose that you dreamt that Spring arrived in this way. Tell your dream in simple prose as to a little child. Avoid rhythm and rhyme and poetic expressions like “ April slumbers half the year ” (*i.e.*, where half the year is spring-time), “ ere the day-star raised her flame ” (*i.e.*, before the sun rose), which are beautiful in poetry but affected or namby-pamby, or at all events out of place in good prose. It will not matter if you cannot work in every thought expressed by the poet.

\* With the Editor’s cordial acknowledgments to “ John Halsham.”

## CHAPTER VI.—ON ORDER AND SEQUENCE

§ 20. **The Form of the Essay.**—We are often advised to make a skeleton plan of an essay on a given subject before beginning to write. It is interesting and helpful to inquire whether the distinguished authors whose essays are printed on pages 155 to 189 appear to have built up their work upon a plan. Let us consider these essayists in order.

(1.) BACON in his essay *Of Travel* appears to have worked to Notes as follows: (1) What travel is; (2) Take a guide; (3) Keep a diary; (4) Things to be observed; (5) Know the language; (6) Keep moving; (7) Get introductions; (8) Persons to be seen; (9) Quarrels; (10) Behaviour of the returned traveller.

(2.) STEELE in his *Sir Roger de Coverley* is describing a personality, and refuses to make an inventory of him, choosing rather to draw a pen-portrait, which he does in a masterly manner. This short description is, however, not an essay in the ordinary sense of the term.

(3.) ADDISON in his *Household Superstitions* may have planned his paper, consciously or unconsciously, under the following headings: (1) Story of superstitious people; (2) Effect upon himself; (3) Further instances culled from memory; (4) Folly of superstition; (5) The antidote.

(4.) OLIVER GOLDSMITH's *London Tradesmen* may be analyzed as follows: (1) Tradesmen's signs; (2) Ultra civility; (3) Clever salesmanship; (4) Flattery; (5) Wisdom for a man's self.

(5.) WILLIAM COWPER in his essay-letter on *Country Congregations* seems to have planned thus : (1) What shall I write about ; (2) Condition of country churches ; (3) Country parsons ; (4) Behaviour of country congregations ; (5) Country church music ; (6) Clerk and Squire ; (7) Ladies at church ; (8) Church manners generally.

(6.) CHARLES LAMB seems to be the very apostle of inconsequence, but at the same time there is always a natural, flowing sequence. He describes without dissecting.

(7.) WILLIAM HAZLITT in *The Waiter* is nearer to Lamb than to the more formal essayists of an earlier day. There is, however, some attempt at a plan which you might work out for yourself.

(8.) R. L. STEVENSON in his *Plea for Gas Lamps* is more precise, following chronological order after a statement of his subject : (1) How to light city streets ; (2) Migratory lanterns ; (3) Oil lights ; (4) Gas lights and their superiority ; (5) The lamplighter ; (6) The future—electricity ; (6) A warning against garishness and a plea for mild lustre.

(9.) ROBERT LYND. This paper is included among our “essays”; but it is not easy to classify it, nor is it necessary to do so. You will find, however, on reading it carefully that the charming paper is strung together—or shall we say, threaded together—by a sequence of thought. The “subject” proposed is really dealt with *seriatim*, but in a manner which it is hopeless and useless to imitate.

We come to the conclusion (*after studying our selected examples*) that the writer of an essay would be well advised to arrange his material under definite headings before beginning to write.

But a great deal depends upon the subject and the method of treatment proposed. Ask yourself in the face of any given subject :—

(1) Am I going to write a paper giving information

on the subject—a kind of *article* suitable for an encyclopædia? *or*

(2) Am I going to use this subject to show how it appeals to myself, to allow my imaginative fancy to play round it?—that is, to write an *essay* in the best sense of the term.\*

In the former case the framework of the paper should be drawn up very carefully and adhered to very strictly. In the latter case a few notes in sequence will be sufficient, and more freedom may be allowed. An anecdote or illustration would be out of place in an article, but quite suitable for an essay.

**§ 21. Choosing a Subject.**—An essayist ought to be allowed to choose his own subject, but the writer of an article may reasonably be asked to work to order, and ought to be able to collect information from various sources on the subject proposed. Even an essayist would do well to collect a little definite information before beginning to write, so as to avoid diffuseness and padding as well as to suggest ideas or trains of thought. Consider the following list of subjects for articles and essays, and select quickly two or three which make instant appeal to you:—

- (1) The Management and Care of a Dog or Horse. (2) Fairy Tales. (3) Music in Nature. (4) Canals. (5) Poetry as a Help to the Study of History. (6) If not Yourself, who would you be? (7) Your Favourite Musician. (8) Intensive Poultry Culture. (9) The Planning of an Allotment. (10) Naval Warfare of the Present Day. (11) Any Shakespeare Play you have recently seen. (12) The Object of Education. (13) Modern Dancing. (14) Present Day Football. (15) The Value of Tact. (16) Should People have Secrets? (17) Votes for Women. (18) Your Favourite Game. (19) The Girl of To-day. (20) The Formation of a Cricket, Football, or Hockey Club. (21) Cycling. (22) The

\* *N.B.*—This second course is not a soft option—not, at least, if the present writer were going to judge the production.

Planning of a Garden. (23) The Care and Management of a Sailing Boat. (24) A Camping Holiday. (25) A Coal Mine. (26) Swimming. (27) Birds in Winter. (28) On being Lucky. (29) The Use of Sunday. (30) Your Favourite Summer Holiday. (31) Emigration. (32) The Best Occupation. (33) Fences on a Farm. (34) Country Life *versus* City Life. (35) Birthday Presents. (36) Forecasting the Weather. (37) Listening-in. (38) Why should we study History? (39) The Uses of Flowers. (40) Honey. (41) The Care of Books in the Home. (42) The Choice of Fruit Trees for a Small Garden. (43) Thinking Power in Animals. (44) Learning French. (45) Furnishing your own Room. (46) The Benefits of Games. (47) Heating of Houses. (48) Lighting of Houses. (49) Famous Women in History. (50) "A Little Learning is a Dangerous Thing." (51) The Work of a Farmer. (52) The Future of Aviation. (53) The Abolition of the Steam Locomotive. (54) The Qualities of a Good Business Man. (55) The Uses and Abuses of Advertisement. (56) The True Friend. (57) The Ideal House. (58) Your Favourite Book (or Books). (59) Christmas Presents. (60) Packing for a Holiday.

### EXERCISE XIII

1. Choose a few of the foregoing subjects, and state, in connection with each, whether you would deal with it as an article or a personal essay.
2. Draw up a skeleton or plan showing your proposed treatment of each of the selected subjects, and give a rough estimate of the number of words in each section.
3. Write a good beginning and a good ending for each subject which interests you. (A sentence or two will be sufficient.)
4. Name the sources from which information may be drawn on each of the subjects you have selected.
5. What is meant by the "reference department" in a library?
6. What do you consider the uses of essay writing?

§ 22. **The Building of an Essay or Informative Article.**—The following are suggested as steps in the production of an essay or article.

(1.) *Preparation.*—Collect from all possible sources over a period of several days as much information as can be obtained. Make rough notes during this stage.

(2.) *Arrangement.*—Decide upon the plan or framework of the paper, and arrange the above rough notes under headings in proper sequence.

(3.) *Rough Copy.*—Write out the essays under these headings with wide spaces between the lines to allow for corrections and improvements. Read over very critically what you have written, and correct freely. Apply the following tests : (1) Does each sentence sound right ? (2) Have I begun several sentences in the same way ? (3) Are any of my sentences involved ? (4) Are any of them obscure in meaning ? (5) Is the spelling correct ? (6) Are all the proper stops and capital letters inserted ?

(4.) *Fair Copy.*—Write out the essay or article in ink.

§ 23. **Sequence of Sentences.**—In any paragraph of good English prose there is a regular sequence of thought, and it is a rare thing for a sentence to stand alone without reference to something that has gone before. There is also in a well constructed essay or article a paragraph sequence, one part of the composition following easily upon another, and connecting closely with it. Consider the following paragraphs in which the links in thought-sequence are printed in italics :—

On the appearance of the enemy, the country people fled into *the city* as best they could. The weak places in the *defences* were occupied by military posts ; elsewhere the *walls* and the Tiber were deemed sufficient protection.

The enemy would have forced their way over the Sublician *bridge*, had it not been for one man, *Horatius Cocles*. The good fortune of Rome provided *him* as her bulwark on that memorable day.

*He* happened to be on guard at *the bridge* when he saw Janiculum taken by a sudden assault and the enemy rushing down from *it* to the river, whilst *his own* men, a panic-stricken mob, were deserting their posts and throwing away *their* arms. He *reproached* them one after another for their cowardice, tried to stop them; *appealed* to them in heaven's name to stand; *declared* that it was in vain for them to seek safety in flight whilst leaving the bridge open behind them; and that there would very soon be more of the enemy on the *Palatine* and the *Capitol* than there were on the Janiculum.

So he shouted to them to break down the bridge by sword or fire, or by whatever means they could; *he* would meet the enemies' attack so far as *one man* could keep them at bay.

LIVY.

Ascertain, first of all, whether any one of these sentences makes complete sense when it is entirely cut off from its context. Having settled this point, find out which word or words carry back the reader's thoughts to some one or something already mentioned. For example, in the foregoing—

*the city* is Rome, which has already been named.  
*defences* and *walls* connect with *city*.  
*bridge* connects with *Tiber* in the preceding sentence.  
*him* and *He* refer back to *Horatius Cocles*.  
*the bridge* is the Sublician just mentioned.  
*it* is the hill known as the *Janiculum*.  
*his own* refers back to *Horatius*.  
*their* and *them* connect with *his own men*.  
*reproached*, *appealed*, and *declared* form a kind of rising climax.

*Palatine* and *Capitol* are two other of the seven Roman hills, and connect with *Janiculum*.

*So* connects with all that has gone before.

*he* and *one man* each refer to the speaker, *Horatius Cocles*.

**§ 24. Sequence of Paragraphs.**—The manner in which the sequence of thought connects paragraph with paragraph can also be studied in the short extract

given above. In the following passage only the first paragraph will stand alone. The others are connected in series by means of the words printed in heavy type.

The first of our society is a gentleman of Worcestershire, of ancient descent, a Baronet, his name Sir Roger de Coverley. His great-grandfather was inventor of that famous country-dance which is called after him.

All who know that shire are well acquainted with the parts and merits of **Sir Roger**. He is a gentleman that is very singular in his behaviour, but his singularities proceed from his good sense, and are contradictions to the manners of the world only as he thinks the world is in the wrong.

However, **this humour** creates him no enemies, for he does nothing with sourness or obstinacy ; and his being unconfined to modes and forms makes him but the readier and more capable to please and oblige all who know him. When he is in town he lives in Soho Square. It is said he keeps himself a bachelor, by reason he was crossed in love by a perverse beautiful widow of the next county to him.

Before **this disappointment**, Sir Roger was what you call a fine gentleman, had often supped with my Lord Rochester and Sir George Etherege, fought a duel upon his first coming to town, and kicked Bully Dawson in a public coffee-house for calling him youngster. But, being ill-used by the above-mentioned widow, he was very serious for a year and a half ; and though, his temper being naturally jovial, he at last got over it, he grew careless of himself, and never dressed afterwards. He continues to wear a coat and doublet of the same cut that were in fashion at the time of his repulse, which, in his merry humours, he tells us has been in and out twelve times since he first wore it.

RICHARD STEELE.

An easy sequence is one of the marks of good composition. Any portion which breaks away from the central thought is known as a **digression**, but only very experienced writers can manage to digress gracefully.

## EXERCISE XIV

1. Study the sequence of sentence and paragraph in two or more of the essays printed on pages 155 to 189.
2. Note that in Bacon's essay *Of Studies* there are parts which seem to stand alone. Detach them.
3. What is the thought which connects these seemingly independent portions with the rest of the essay?
4. What is the difference between an essay and a diary in this matter of sequence?

## CHAPTER VII.—EXPRESSION BY LETTER

§ 25. **The Letter Form.**—Why is it easier to write a letter than an essay? I hope your reply to this question will not be, “Because, in writing a letter, one does not need to be so particular about grammar and the choice of words.” A good letter—even a familiar one—ought to be written with due respect to the rules of writing, and ought not to be full of slang. Care in these matters is due to the person to whom we are writing. It is an insult to a familiar friend or close relative to assume that “anything will do for old So-and-so.” The most satisfactory answer to the above question is, “Because, in letter-writing, a particular reader is kept steadily in mind and is actually present with the writer, at least in the spirit.”

An English writer named William Cobbett wrote a grammar for his little son Paul and other boys and girls of the same age and attainments, and he put it into the form of a series of letters not only to engage Paul’s attention, but to help himself in the task of composing his book. “I have put my work,” he writes, “into the form of Letters in order that I might be continually reminded that I was addressing myself to persons who needed to be spoken to with great clearness.”

There is a valuable suggestion here for those who find essay-writing a difficult task. When ideas refuse to flow easily, and words come slowly, it is a good plan to begin again and write the whole composition in the form and in the spirit of a letter to an actual person on whose sympathy you could count if the letter were

intended to go by post. “ My dear — ” is often the tap which turns on the flow of language.

William Cowper did this in his *Country Congregations*, which is printed on page 166. He must have felt the difficulty mentioned above, and therefore cast his “ essay ” into the form of a letter which is more full of personal feeling and charm than a formal essay on the same subject would probably have been. It is difficult to scatter charm over a multitude.

**§ 26. A Neglected Accomplishment.**—When paper was very expensive and it cost a shilling or more to send a letter people wrote letters worth reading, taking a pleasure in the exercise and conferring the keenest of pleasure on those to whom they wrote. Few people write good letters to-day when paper and postage are so cheap; yet the pleasure of receiving a long, chatty, well-written letter is as great as ever. Of course, if we wish to feel this pleasure we must write similar letters in return, and that is the other side of the question. The effort is too great, but that is because the pleasant and pleasure-giving habit has not been formed.

Sir Robert Ball, the famous astronomer, once wrote :—

We are always told to be systematic in our work, but a certain lady was systematic not only in the duties of her life, but in her affection for her friends. She counted up those whom she specially wished to cherish—her brothers and sisters, not a few cousins and other relations, her school friends, her other friends—and they numbered twenty-eight. And so she formed a little scheme. One day in each month was assigned to each friend. When there were a few days over, then certain particular friends got two days that month. It might be a visit or a letter. Perhaps it was some little gift; perhaps it was some little attention to the child of the friend. It might even be nothing more than a cutting from a newspaper, or a few kind words on a card, or some message, or even, without any actual communication whatever, it might be at least a few kind and sympathetic thoughts. That little

calendar of the affections—of which no one knew except the tender heart herself—was indeed twice blessed. It blessed those who received it ; it blessed her that sent. I ought to know. I was one of the happy twenty-eight. The lady was a beloved sister of my own.

Certain well-known Biblical advice seems appropriate in this connection. If you were to adopt this lady's idea, how many days in the month would you fill ? One often hears of the dullness of home life. How much of its so-called boredom would be relieved if the postman brought each day a few well-written letters, real letters, telling all about the writers in the hope that the recipients will reply in a similar manner. For when a letter drags let the writer tell all about himself without apology, provided that he or she is prepared to take as deep an interest in the affairs of the correspondent when the reply comes.

**§ 27. The Form of a Letter.**—The historian, John Richard Green, once wrote to a friend :—

Your correspondence is such a genuine mixture of love, chit-chat, riding, Homer, dancing, and geology, that it has all the pleasurable effect on me that Johnson's Dictionary had on the old lady who said, " It is the most charming reading in the world ; indeed, its only drawback was a certain want of connection."

The question arises : " Shall we draw up a skeleton scheme for a letter before we begin to write ? " Perhaps not. The result would be too formal and stilted, too much " like a book," and a very poor book. Yet it is a kindness to the recipient of the letter for the writer to marshal his subjects in some kind of order, and to exhaust each one before passing to another. We must avoid grafting the dancing upon the Homer, though in a letter the two subjects may quite appropriately stand together. The real connecting thread is not so much the " subject " of the letter as the

personal feeling and sympathy between writer and reader.

There is one kind of preparation, however, which is permissible, if not absolutely necessary, before the writer of a letter sits down to write. Jottings must be made during the period before the letter is composed of things which have happened or have come into the writer's mind which he knows will interest his correspondent. And if the letter is to be written in answer to another the various points in the first letter should first be taken up and comments made upon them. This is a delicate compliment.

**§ 28. Some Selected Letters.**—There is a much better plan than drawing up or reading rules for letter-writing—namely, to study closely a few letters which have been written by well-known writers. On pages 190 to 210 of this book ten such letters are printed, each of which is worth very careful reading. Let us consider them in the order in which they are printed,

(1.) *Joseph Addison to William Congreve, the Poet.*—The salutation “Sir” is rather stiff, according to the ideas of the present day, but Addison and his period were much more formal than most people of our time. We should now use “Sir” when writing to some one who has annoyed us. Even a complete stranger we usually address as “Dear Sir.” This is a travel letter, very correct but very friendly, full of restrained respect and even affection, and not without its quiet fun. Note how he gives an idea of the grandeur of Versailles without describing it, and pays a pretty compliment to his correspondent in doing so. The writer twice pulls himself up at points which you can discover for yourself, reminding us that a travel letter ought not to read like a guide book. Descriptions are only interesting when they are permeated with the personality of the writer. But Addison does show his preferences in his comparison between Versailles

and Fontainebleau, to the advantage of the latter. How can you judge from this letter the nature of the relationship between Addison and Congreve?

(2.) *Lord Chesterfield (1694-1773) to his Son.*—This letter is an excellent example of encouragement without flattery—"tolerably well-bred"—"roughness (of which you had your share)." Of course the writer has a right to criticize, and in Chesterfield's time sons paid great heed to what their fathers said. Later writers have sneered at Chesterfield because, as they said, he was chiefly concerned with outward graces of manner. How far is this criticism justified (if at all) in this present letter?

(3.) *Dr. Samuel Johnson to Mrs. Thrale.*—Johnson uses the formal "Dear Madam" of the eighteenth century, but his correspondent becomes "dearest Lady" before the end of the letter. He begins very simply, but cannot altogether forget his great Dictionary—"supervenient conceptions," "consanguinity of our intellects," with a little Latin thrown in. The letter is, however, full of the warm affection he felt for the lady who was a very good and helpful friend to him for many years. The second paragraph is particularly interesting in our present inquiry.

(4.) *Thomas Gray to an Intimate Friend.*—This letter was written from Cambridge. Gray is usually considered very stiff and precise, a kind of "Miss Nancy" of a man, but the first part of this letter shows a very tender heart in the right place. He is playful, too, in a quiet way. He even mocks gently at himself, and in an indirect way teaches us not to be "flowery" or poetical in our prose, and especially in our familiar letters. We must steadily avoid "fine writing." In one sentence he is quoting something. Can you discover it? Note the mark of exclamation after "gosling." This is the mark of a joke. Use it in your own letters to prevent misunderstandings.

(5.) *Oliver Goldsmith to his Mother.*—This letter is

almost pure narrative, but the writer contrives to make it personal and intimate because he knows that he has the sympathy and consideration of his reader. It is all about himself, but never egotistical, for it reveals a generous, sunny nature, of which we feel we cannot hear too much ; moreover, as the first sentence shows us, he is only following his mother's lead in recounting his own adventures so fully. Note how exquisitely he tells of the "poor woman all in tears ;" how he excuses his "old friend" right up to the end ; how he acknowledges kindness and makes no attempt to impose upon it. This is a model letter so far as its spirit is concerned. As for his happy-go-lucky proceedings, how could one blame a person who tells his story with so much good humour. There is a world of humour and of self-revelation in the sentence "the captain set sail with as much indifference as if I had been on board." What a joy a letter like this would be on one's breakfast table !

(6.) *John Wesley to his Brother*.—Here we have an "egotistical" letter of a very different kind ; but behind this account of sickness the careful reader can find evidence of an indomitable mind. The writer is not whining nor taking a pleasure in recounting his ailments (a fault in many letters), but showing how, as he would probably have expressed it, the "spirit indeed was willing" (and triumphant) though "the flesh was weak." So when we write about illness in our letters let us do so to show how it was banished ! Do not imitate "*exceeding sick*," "*something better*," or "*I eat a little*," or "*have laid down*." What words should we use in place of those in italics ? This letter gives, moreover, a picture of the kind of life led by the first Methodist.

(7.) *Lord Jeffrey to a Grandchild*.—The writer of this letter was a lawyer, and afterwards a Scottish judge and a clever writer of severely learned papers ; but you would not have guessed these things from the

manner of his letter to Nancy. "Sonsy," by the way, is a Scottish word meaning the opposite of thin. Where does the rhyming end? How does the writer enlist the child's interest? Does he "write down" to his grandchild or give her a lot of advice? Would she be able to read the whole of the letter herself? It would be difficult to measure the pleasure that such a letter would give to the right kind of child. And the recipe is simple—Write of simple things, and think nothing too small to recount.

(8.) *William Hazlitt to his Son*.—This is a letter of advice, and as boys do not usually like advice, the father begins by appealing to his son's affection—"I may not be with you long." After that, what boy who loved his father, as we know this boy did, could refuse to receive guidance. Moreover, the writer does not pose as perfect—"caution you against my own errors." Nor does he spare the boy, who is given, again and again, what some of us would call "the straight tip"; but with each blow comes a little balm. "You have hitherto been a spoiled child . . . ; but you have good nature and good sense." It is worth while comparing the substance of this letter with that of the letter written by Lord Chesterfield.

(9.) *Thomas Hood to a Little Boy Friend*.—Thomas Hood was a comic writer, but not a buffoon. He was fond of puns, which we now consider rather old-fashioned and of an inferior order of wit. His fun, however, is still fresh to healthy minds, as this letter will show. The letter is rather pathetic, too, for Hood had to make jokes for a living, and people expected him to make one in every sentence he wrote; in fact, he seems to have expected it of himself, and, moreover, when he wrote this letter he was very ill. One wonders how many of these jokes Dunnie would understand. Perhaps not all, but if some days later he was found laughing at nothing, that would probably be when something had dawned upon him. It is worth

remembering that continual joking in letters can be very tiresome, and that we must confine jokes to letters addressed to those with whom we are very intimate.

(10.) *Lewis Carroll to a Little Girl.*—One expects an amusing letter from the author of *Alice in Wonderland*, and this particular epistle would not disappoint Gertrude. On the whole one might do worse than practice writing letters to little children whom one wishes to please and tease in a good-natured manner. The exercise, however, is not so easy as it looks.

### EXERCISE XV

i. Write a letter in reply to the following :—

Somewhere in N. CORNWALL.

MY DEAR JACK,—Mother told me you had gone to ——\* for your holiday, and I hope you are having better weather than we have here, for it has rained cats and dogs and blown elephants since we arrived a week ago. We have spent all our time in waterproofs and sou'-westers—except in our beds, of course. The scenery is grand, so I am told, but we have not yet seen it for the rain.

When the sun begins to shine, as I am told it usually does in these parts, we expect to enjoy ourselves. The bathing is good and safe, provided you do not play the fool. Prawn-hunting or fishing (I'm not sure which I must say) is good sport. There's plenty of golf for father and tennis for the girls, and you can ramble for miles on grassy downs by the sea. Last, but not least, there is Cornish cream. If you have not tasted that, you have a treat in store.

I may be rather silly, but I have always liked the Arthur poems of Tennyson, and next week, if it stops raining, we are going to Tintagel by car, about twenty miles away, and I am going to stand on *the very beach* where Merlin and Blaize stood when the ninth wave

\* Insert a name to suit your own circumstances.

swept the baby prince to the magician's feet. "Here is an heir for Uther!" and all the rest of it. I hope this does not bore you. We shall come back by Dozmary Pool, which *they say* was the mere of the *Morte D'Arthur*. But no more of that at present.

What are you doing? Write and tell me, and don't send a picture post-card unless a letter comes with it. And what are you reading? We are just finishing *Lorna Doone*, because we are to have a motor trip to Dartmoor before we leave the West Country, and I want to know something about it.

Hooray! The sun has come out and the wind in the right quarter for fair weather. So no more at present from

Your affectionate friend,

WILLIAM ANGUS.

2. The following subjects were proposed for essay-writing in a recent examination: (1) Fairy Tales; (2) Music in Nature; (3) Carols; (4) Poetry as a Help in the Study of History; (5) The Furniture of a House as an Index of Character. Do you think any one of these subjects could be dealt with in a letter to a sympathetic friend? If so, try to write the letter.
3. Write a letter to a friend describing some book you are reading, or have recently read.
4. Make the following letter less breathless:—

MY DEAR BETTY,—We left Colchester last night and had a breakdown about eight miles from the city, the tyre burst and Jack is not very good yet at putting on the spare so he tinkered on at it for weeks and weeks so to speak until a young man came along on a motor bike and he fixed us up in no time, quite a nice young fellow and I don't think I dislike motor bikes quite so much as I did for he was really very nice and helpful, we spun along all right but the rain fell in buckets and the wind blew it in under the hood so we were like drowned kittens when we got home; you don't miss much not having a car when it is wet I think.—Yours ever, BUNTY.

5. Write a letter to the editor of a paper on the subject of motor-horns, complaining of the ear-splitting, snarling, terrifying character of some of these contrivances, and suggesting (1) that they should be subject to inspection by the authorities ; and (2) that each one should be really musical.
6. Try to re-write Lewis Carroll's letter on page 209 in the style of Dr. Johnson (see page 194).
7. Try to re-write Thomas Hood's letter to Dunnie (page 207) in the style of Addison (see page 190).
8. What is the difference between a good letter of advice and a sermon ?
9. Write the letter to which the following was a reply :—

DEAR MADAM,—We are in receipt of your letter of the 5th inst., and thank you for drawing attention to the condition of the piano which has been delivered to you, also for adding to the carman's delivery sheet the words "badly damaged" in conjunction with your signature.

Our foreman has made careful inquiries at the works, and is satisfied that the instrument was in good order and perfectly packed when it left his hands. The damage must, therefore, have been sustained in transit. We are acquainting the Railway Company with the circumstances, and, meanwhile, will send a fully qualified representative to find out the exact nature of the damage. On receipt of his report we shall be able to decide whether it will be possible to repair the damage at your residence.

Please accept our assurance that no effort will be spared to give you full satisfaction in connection with your esteemed order.—Faithfully yours,

MORGAN AND CO., LTD.

10. John Wilson, of 10 Wood Street, Gravesend, wants a new raincoat and a pair of angling waders similar to those previously bought from Messrs. Wills and Sons, Ltd., Outfitters, 115

High Street, Birmingham. Send the order to this firm, with careful attention to detail.

11. Jane Barlow, 115 Chestnut Drive, London, S.E.22, has just heard that her bosom friend, Ethel Smith, of 24 Cornmarket, Oxford, has gained a good scholarship at one of the Oxford Colleges for women. If you were Jane Barlow, what would you do ?
12. How would you conclude a letter (1) to an acquaintance ; (2) to a very close friend ; (3) to your mother ; (4) to your sister or brother ; (5) to your schoolmaster or schoolmistress ?
13. How would you qualify the advice to letter-writers, " Write as you would speak " ?
14. What kind of letter do you (1) like, (2) dislike, to receive ?
15. Eliminate the jargon and the breathlessness from the following :—

DEAR MADAM,—We beg to acknowledge with thanks the receipt of your kind favour of the 13th inst., and in reply to same to say that we shall be delighted to meet your wishes by sending the material required which is out of stock for a day or two but shall be sent within a week. Assuring you of our best attention at all times,—We are, yours faithfully.

16. Write an answer to one of the letters printed on pages 190 to 210 of this book—for example, Oliver Goldsmith's letter to his mother.

## CHAPTER VIII.—ON KEEPING A DIARY

§ 29. **A Red-Letter Diary.**—The sight of a beautiful new diary about the end of the Old Year makes many people resolve to fill it, just as the advent of Spring in Chaucer's day made men and women “longen to go on pilgrimages.” These would-be diarists begin on January 1st, and usually end about the 6th or 7th; which is a pity, for keeping a diary is good fun, and reading it in after years is still better. But modern life is very full, and when the time comes for “entering up” we are usually too tired, while it is fatal to postpone the task until the following morning.

A “Red-Letter Diary” forms a compromise between no diary at all and one which contains an entry for every day. It is made up of accounts of the eventful days. The name is not perfect, for a diary is, strictly speaking, a daily record; but many of our days are very much alike, and in after years a complete diary makes rather dull reading, and the value of a diary depends largely upon the way in which it vividly recalls the events of bygone days.

We are not all born diarists, however, and only those who feel diary-keeping a pleasure should attempt the task. For such as these a little study of well-known literary diaries will be helpful and interesting if they remember that they cannot hope to attain immortality by means of their diaries. English literature is not particularly rich in diaries or journals, as these productions are sometimes called, but the extracts given on pages 211 to 232 of this book will show that the records which have come down to us are as lively and interesting as they are historically valuable.

The honest diarist reveals himself even more clearly than the letter writer, and still more clearly than the essayist, and each example given hereafter should be studied not only for its contents, but also to find the writer behind it. With regard to style of writing we shall see that the diarist is not expected to write out each sentence in full, but may, if he chooses, jot down phrases and even single words, provided always that his meaning is never obscured by his abbreviations.

§ 30. **Extracts from Literary Diaries.**—On pages 211 to 232 are printed some extracts from famous diaries, which might be carefully read at this point.

(1.) *Samuel Pepys.*—This diarist wrote his diary in cypher, and it was not published until long after his death ; probably it was not intended to be published, but to be consulted in after years in order to refresh the writer's memory of past events, and give him the opportunity of tracing the development of his own character—the best of all reasons for writing a diary.

A diary may contain jottings or shortened sentences—“ We also to church and then home,” “ Home from my office to my lord's lodgings,” “ and so to bed.” Pepys came over from the Hague with Charles II., but his report of this “ great event ” is (fortunately) not nearly so full as those entries concerning his own personal affairs. He was not concerned to be a journalist or chronicler, but he has an eye for the essentials of a picture ; here is no journalese or padding. In the second and third passages Pepys gives us an insight into his own soul. He is a music-lover with ideas of his own and just a little of a snob, surprised that the gift of music should come to one who does not wear gloves ! Then comes an interesting record of how gentlemen fed in the days of the Merry Monarch (and what it cost !), with hints on the management of a wife. Pepys is either very conceited or he does not spare himself. The excursion on Lord's Day is a

model of description of a “red-letter day,” interesting because it tells of the little things and reveals the writer still more clearly.

(2.) *John Evelyn*.—This diarist reports an outstanding historical event more fully than Pepys, and at the end of each paragraph adds a personal reflection, the mark of a well-kept diary. Evelyn’s sentences are apt to get out of hand, and need “tying-up.” Try to “tie-up” the first sentence under Jan. 24 in the description of “The Great Frost.” Note that a diary of this kind forms an important part of the “material of history,” for a writer like Evelyn has no temptation to tell anything but the truth, and, moreover, he goes to see for himself before writing.

(3.) *John Wesley*.—The preacher has an eye to the dramatic, and indeed this meeting makes an effective “scene” full of sharp contrast and effective retort. One can imagine Wesley finding comfort in the writing of his diary. Richard or Beau Nash was the leader of fashion in Bath, and his fear of Wesley was a compliment to the preacher.

(4.) *Henry Fielding*.—Provided that the voyager is a good sailor he ought certainly to keep a diary, if only to counteract the tedium of the journey. Fielding tells in a delightful way of a delightful incident, and makes us see things through his own eyes. Note how this personal interest in the kitten’s fate keeps up the tension of the story; but, then, Fielding was a genius. One wonders how a modern journalist would have reported the incident. Try to render it afresh in *Daily Shriek* style with appropriate headlines.

(5.) *Fanny Burney*.—Few diarists get such chances of exciting material as the author of *Evelina*, but she fully deserved them, and took pains with her records of them. With what art she strikes the keynote! One can feel the palpitation—pursued by a king and a mad one! She had, too, an excellent memory and could recall a conversation with exactness—an excel-

lent quality in a diarist. Her style of presentation is worthy of very careful study. Contrast it with that of Wesley.

(6.) *James Boswell*.—As in his life of Dr. Johnson, Boswell is more conscious of his famous companion than of himself. He is always ready to turn away from the immediate surroundings to report some conversation with his hero, and would rather miss all the glories of Scottish scenery than one remark of the Lexicographer, even if it floors himself. This is by no means an ordinary journal.

### EXERCISE XVI

1. Write up to-day's entry for your diary ; not a mere list of happenings, but a record of how things have appeared to you to happen.
2. We all report things in our own way. Compare your diary entry with that of a friend who has undertaken a similar task, and note evidences of personality, however slight they may be.
3. How does a diary differ from (1) a letter, (2) an essay ?
4. Write a short estimate of the personal character *as it appears to you*, of (1) Samuel Pepys ; (2) Fanny Burney ; (3) John Wesley.
5. Imagine that you were a witness of the following incident, and report it as for your diary :—

Remarkable scenes took place in Sighthill Cemetery, Glasgow, this afternoon, when Sir Harry Lauder unveiled a Celtic cross as a memorial to Mr. Mackenzie Murdoch, the Scots violinist, who was his close companion.

Sir Harry sang “ *Hame o' Mine*,” which Murdoch wrote, and which was popular in Scotland. A crowd of 10,000 persons joined in the chorus.

In the rush to get near Sir Harry people trampled over graves and climbed on tombstones.

In a tribute to his friend, Sir Harry said they started

to tour the country together as boys. There were no fancy hotels for them in those days. They were struggling, but they never had any idea of making money. Their idea was to make a name and give the people music and make them happy.

6. Make an attempt at an estimate of your own character as for a page in your diary. You might prefer to do it in verse. One who made the attempt began :—

I cannot win a sportsman's name ;  
Folks think me dull, and so I seem ;  
I am not good at any game :  
I fence a little and I dream.

[*N.B.*—Here is another metre which might be useful when the diarist drops into verse :—

We shoot the hippopotamus with bullets made of platinum,  
Because if we use leaden ones, his hide is sure to flatten 'em.]

7. Write down, as for your diary, your frank opinion of some book which you have just finished.

[*N.B.*—The expression “piffle” or “rot” will be too short.]

8. Make cuttings from to-day's newspaper such as would be suitable for pasting in your diary.

9. Go, if possible, to see a famous picture. Buy a picture post-card of this picture, paste it into your diary for the day on which you visited the gallery, and write your impression of the painting.

10. Write a diary note on to-day's weather, with exact particulars if possible.

11. Make some direct Nature observations, and enter your notes in to-day's diary.

12. Make an estimate of your present position with regard to your school studies.

## CHAPTER IX.—DIALOGUE AND DRAMA

§ 31. **Conversations.**—“What is the use of a book,” said Alice, “without pictures and conversations?” The preference for the “conversations” of a book is not confined to children, nor is it altogether a sign of mental laziness. The broken-up page is easier to read; character reveals itself very readily in dialogue; and the blending of talk and description increases the liveliness of the whole narrative. There is descriptive conversation, such as we find in all novels, and dramatic conversation, as in a play. Occasionally a piece of descriptive conversation can be satisfactorily rendered as drama. Let us attempt the translation of the following:—

And at last they came to chimney No. 345. Out of the top of it, his head and shoulders just showing, stuck poor Mr. Grimes; so sooty, and bleared, and ugly, that Tom could hardly bear to look at him. And in his mouth was a pipe: but it was not alight, though he was pulling at it with all his might.

“Attention, Mr. Grimes,” said the truncheon; “here is a gentleman come to see you.”

But Mr. Grimes only kept grumbling, “My pipe won’t draw. My pipe won’t draw.”

“Keep a civil tongue, and attend!” said the truncheon; and popped up just like Punch, hitting Grimes such a crack over the head with itself, that his brains rattled inside like a dried walnut in its shell. He tried to get his hands out, and rub the place; but he could not, for they were stuck fast in the chimney.

Now he was forced to attend.

“Hey!” he said, “why, it’s Tom! I suppose you have come here to laugh at me, you spiteful little atomy?”

Tom assured him he had not, but only wanted to help him.

“ I don’t want anything except beer, and that I can’t get ; and a light to this bothering pipe, and that I can’t get either.”

“ I’ll get you one,” said Tom ; and he took up a live coal (there were plenty lying about) and put it to Grimes’ pipe : but it went out instantly.

“ It’s no use,” said the truncheon, leaning itself up against the chimney, and looking on. “ I tell you, it is no use. His heart is so cold that it freezes everything that comes near him. You will see that presently, plain enough.”

“ Oh, of course, it’s my fault. Everything’s always my fault,” said Grimes. “ Now don’t go to hit me again ” (for the truncheon started upright, and looked very wicked) ; “ you know, if my arms were only free, you daren’t hit me then.”

This consists of narrative and talk, and in translating into drama the narrative must be turned into Stage Directions, which ought to contain all that is included in the story portion.

SCENE.—*Chimney-pot No. 345. Mr. Grimes : Tom : the Truncheon. Mr. Grimes’ head and shoulders protrude from the chimney-pot. He is sooty, and his face is bleared and ugly. He pulls hard at an unlighted pipe. Tom can hardly bear to look at him.*

TRUNCHEON. Attention, Mr. Grimes ! Here is a gentleman come to see you.

MR. GRIMES (*grumbling*). My pipe won’t draw. My pipe won’t draw.

TRUNCHEON. Keep a civil tongue and attend !

[*Pops up like Punch and hits Grimes a crack over the head with himself, so that his brains rattle. Grimes tries to get his hands out to rub the place, but fails.*

GRIMES (*forcing attention*). Hey ! Why, it’s Tom ! I suppose you have come here to laugh at me, you spiteful little atomy ?

TOM. I assure you I have not. I only want to help you.

GRIMES. I don’t want anything except beer, and that

I can't get ; and a light to this bothering pipe, and that I can't get either.

Tom. I'll get you one.

[Takes up a live coal from those lying about, and puts it to Grimes' pipe, but it goes out instantly.

TRUNCHEON (*leaning up against the chimney*). It's no use. I tell you it's no use. His heart is so cold that it freezes everything that comes near him. You will see that presently, plain enough.

GRIMES. Oh, of course—it's my fault. Everything's always my fault. [The Truncheon starts up and looks very wicked.] Now don't go to hit me again ; you know, if my arms were only free you daren't hit me then.

The only skill required in this exercise lies in the conversion of the narrative into Stage Directions, but rather more is required when the conversation is indirectly reported as in some of the following passages.

## EXERCISE XVII

Dramatize each of the following :—

(1) " Call the next witness," said the King. The next witness was the Duchess's cook. She carried the pepper-box in her hand, and Alice guessed who it was, even before she got into the court, by the way the people near the door began sneezing all at once. " Give your evidence," said the King. " Shan't," said the cook. The King looked anxiously at the White Rabbit, who said in a low voice, " Your Majesty must cross-examine this witness." " Well, if I must, I must," the King said with a melancholy air, and, after folding his arms and frowning at the cook till his eyes were nearly **out** of sight, he said in a deep voice, " What are tarts made of ? " " Pepper, mostly," said the cook. " Treacle," said a sleepy voice behind her. " Collar that Dormouse," the Queen shrieked out. " Behead that Dormouse ! Turn that Dormouse out of court ! Suppress him ! Pinch him ! Off with his whiskers."

LEWIS CARROLL.

(2) Nelson asked Blackwood what he should consider as a victory. That officer answered that he thought it would be a glorious result if fourteen were captured. He replied, "I shall not be satisfied with less than twenty." Soon afterwards he asked him if he did not think there was a signal wanting. Captain Blackwood made answer that he thought the whole fleet seemed very clearly to understand what they were about.

These words were scarcely spoken before that signal was made which will be remembered as long as the language, or even the memory, of England shall endure—Nelson's last signal: "*England expects every man will do his duty!*" It was received throughout the fleet with a shout of answering acclamation. "Now," said Lord Nelson, "I can do no more. We must trust to the great Disposer of all events and the justice of our cause. I thank God for this great opportunity of doing my duty."

ROBERT SOUTHEY.

(3) An old Peasant and a Labourer were going home through the forest to the village one evening, in the time of the hay harvest, when they suddenly found themselves face to face with a Bear.

Scarcely had the Peasant time to utter a cry when the Bear was upon him. It threw him down, rolled him over and looked for a convenient place to begin a meal. Death draws very near to the Peasant.

"Stefan, my kinsman, my dear friend, do not desert me!" he cries from under the Bear to the Labourer.

Then Stefan, putting forth all his strength like a new Hercules, split the Bear's head in two and pierced his body with a pitchfork. The Bear expires.

The danger having vanished, the Peasant got up and soundly scolded the Labourer. Poor Stefan was much astonished.

"Pardon me, what have I done?"

"What have you done, you blockhead? I'd like to know what you are so absurdly pleased about. Why, you've gone and struck the Bear in such a manner that you've utterly ruined his fur!"

(4) And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. And when

he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh ; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him. And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me. And he said unto him, What is thy name ? And he said, Jacob. And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel : for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed. And Jacob asked him, and said, Tell me, I pray thee, thy name. And he said, Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name? And he blessed him there. And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel : for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved.

(5) Portia now desired Shylock to let her look at the bond ; and when she had read it, she said, " This bond is forfeited, and by this the Jew may lawfully claim a pound of flesh, to be by him cut off nearest Antonio's heart." Then she said to Shylock, " Be merciful : take the money, and bid me tear the bond." But no mercy would the cruel Shylock show ; and he said, " By my soul I swear, there is no power in the tongue of man to alter me."—" Why then, Antonio," said Portia, " you must prepare your bosom for the knife :" and while Shylock was sharpening a long knife with great eagerness to cut off the pound of flesh, Portia said to Antonio, " Have you anything to say ? "

*Lamb's Tales from Shakespeare.*

**§ 32. Dramatic Conversation.**—The foregoing Exercise does not make any great intellectual demand. All that is required is a little dexterity in arranging Stage Directions. The invention of dialogue is another matter. Take, for example, the following description written by A. W. Kinglake about the girls of Bethlehem :—

If they catch a glimpse of your ungloved fingers, then again will they make the air ring with their sweet screams of delight and amazement, as they compare the fairness of your hand with the hues of your sunburnt face, or with their own warmer tints. Instantly the ringleader of the gentle rioters imagines a new sin ; with tremulous boldness she touches, then grasps your hand, and smooths it

gently betwixt her own, and pries curiously into its make and colour, as though it were silk of Damascus or shawl of Cashmere. And when they see you, even then, still sage and gentle, the joyous girls will suddenly and screamingly, and all at once, explain to each other that you are surely quite harmless and innocent—a lion that makes no spring, a bear that never hugs ; and upon this faith, one after the other, they will take your passive hand, and strive to explain it, and make it a theme and a controversy. But the one, the fairest and the sweetest of all, is yet the most timid ; she shrinks from the daring deeds of her playmates, and seeks shelter behind their sleeves, and strives to screen her glowing consciousness from the eyes that look upon her. But her laughing sisters will have none of this cowardice ; they vow that the fair one *shall* be their *complice*, *shall* share their dangers, *shall* touch the hand of the stranger. They seize her small wrist and drag her forward by force, and at last, whilst yet she strives to turn away, and to cover up her whole soul under the folds of downcast eyelids, they vanquish her utmost strength, they vanquish her utmost modesty, and marry her hand to yours.

You may say that there is little material here for the construction of a dramatic scene, but a careful reading, and the exercise of a little imagination, will reveal much more than appears on the surface. The scene is near the Gate of Bethlehem, the *dramatis personæ* are the Traveller and as many girls as you please, say five, namely Rebekah, Miriam, Leah, Mary, and “the fairest and sweetest,” Rachel. The rest must be your own invention. You are free to add as many details as you choose. Do not forget that a character in a dramatic scene may speak *to himself*.

### EXERCISE XVIII

Invent a dramatic scene based upon the following passages :—

(1) And now the wrestling match began. Celia wished the young stranger might not be hurt ; but Rosalind felt

most for him. The friendless state which he said he was in, and that he wished to die, made Rosalind think that he was like herself, unfortunate ; and she pitied him so much, and so deep an interest she took in his danger while he was wrestling, that she might almost be said at the moment to have fallen in love with him.

The kindness shown this unknown youth by these fair and noble ladies gave him courage and strength, so that he performed wonders ; and in the end completely conquered his antagonist.

The duke Frederick was much pleased with the courage and skill shown by this young stranger ; and desired to know his name and parentage, meaning to take him under his protection.

The stranger said his name was Orlando, and that he was the youngest son of Sir Rowland de Boys.

Sir Rowland de Boys, the father of Orlando, had been dead some years ; but when he was living, he had been a true subject and dear friend of the banished duke : therefore, when Frederick heard Orlando was the son of his banished brother's friend, all his liking for this brave young man was changed into displeasure, and he left the place in very ill humour. Hating to hear the very name of any of his brother's friends, and yet still admiring the valour of the youth, he said, as he went out, that he wished Orlando had been the son of any other man.

*Lamb's Tales from Shakespeare.*

(2) About sunset, as I was preparing to pass the night under a tree near a native village, and had turned my horse loose, that he might graze at liberty, a woman, returning from the labours of the field, stopped to observe me, and perceiving that I was weary and dejected, inquired into my situation, which I briefly explained to her ; whereupon, with looks of great compassion, she took up my saddle and bridle, and told me to follow her. Having conducted me into her hut, she lighted up a lamp, spread a mat on the floor, and told me I might remain there for the night. Finding that I was very hungry, she said she would procure me something to eat. She accordingly went out, and returned in a short time with a very fine fish ; which having caused to be half-broiled upon some embers, she gave me for

supper. The rites of hospitality being thus performed towards a stranger in distress, my worthy benefactress (pointing to the mat, and telling me I might sleep there without apprehension) called to the female part of her family, who had stood gazing on me all the while in fixed astonishment, to resume their task of spinning cotton ; in which they continued to employ themselves great part of the night. They lightened their labour by songs, one of which was composed extempore ; for I was myself the subject of it. It was sung by one of the young women, the rest joining in a sort of chorus. The words they sang were “ Let us pity the white man ; no mother has he.”

*Travels of Mungo Park.*

§ 33. **Imaginary Dialogue.**—The use of dialogue for the expression of ideas is as old as Plato, probably much older. Here is a passage from his *Republic*. The speakers are Socrates and Adeimantus.

A State arises, as I conceive, out of the needs of mankind. No one is self-sufficing, but all of us have many wants. Can any other origin of a State be imagined ?

There can be no other.

Then, as we have many wants, and many persons are needed to supply them, one takes a helper for one purpose and another for another, and when these partners and helpers are gathered together in one habitation, the body of inhabitants is termed a State.

True, he said.

And they exchange with one another, and one gives and another receives, under the idea that the exchange will be for their good.

Very true.

Then, I said, let us begin and create in idea a State ; and yet the true creator is necessity, who is the mother of invention.

Of course, he replied.

Now, the first and greatest of necessities is food, which is the condition of life and existence.

Certainly.

The second is a dwelling, and the third clothing and the like.

True.

It is obvious that Socrates has it all his own way and that Adeimantus is a mere echo, but there is a great deal of art in the method. The question form arouses interest, and the brief answers afford pauses for the digestion of successive portions of the discourse. Without these interruptions the argument would become heavy, for one can read much quicker than one can think.

### EXERCISE XIX

Break up the following into a dialogue between a Philosopher and a Man in the Street, making any alterations you desire in the form of the sentences. The latter may be allowed to have *some* ideas of his own. The following is suggested as a beginning:—

*Phil.* Generally . . . private.

*M. in S.* Surely that is not altogether true.

*Phil.* Certainly not. A man, etc.

Generally, we are under an impression that a man's duties are public, and a woman's private. But this is not altogether so. A man has a personal work or duty relating to his own home, and a public work or duty, which is the expansion of the other, relating to the state. So a woman has a personal work or duty, relating to her own home, and a public work or duty, which is also the expansion of that.

Now the man's work for his own home is, as has been said, to secure its maintenance, progress, and defence; the woman's to secure its order, comfort, and loveliness.

Expand both these functions. The man's duty, as a member of a commonwealth, is to assist in the maintenance, in the advance, in the defence of the state. The woman's duty, as a member of the commonwealth, is to assist in the ordering, in the comforting, and in the beautiful adornment of the state.

What the man is at his own gate, defending it, if need

be, against insult and spoil, that also, not in a less, but in a more devoted measure, he is to be at the gate of his country, *leaving his home, if need be, even to the spoiler*, to do his more incumbent work there.

And, in like manner, what the woman is to be within her gates, as the centre of order, the balm of distress, and the mirror of beauty ; that she is also to be without her gates, where order is more difficult, distress more imminent, loveliness more rare.

JOHN RUSKIN.

**§ 34. Original Dialogue.**—The next step is more difficult—namely, to produce an imaginary dialogue between two given persons, and occasionally to admit a third person to the discussion. Two examples of this class of work are printed on pages 233 to 242.

Consider the nature of the preparation required before a dialogue of this kind can be produced. It is necessary to learn all that can be learnt about the character, circumstances, and achievements of each person who takes part in the dialogue. In the Landor dialogue we have the famous Tudor educationist, Roger Ascham, and Lady Jane Grey, who was to become a “nine days’ queen.” It is evident from the conversation that the author has carefully studied the circumstances, tastes, and opinions of the old scholar and the young girl, and has seized upon the motive which dominated the life of each—namely, the passionate desire for a life of study and contemplation. He gives to Ascham some of the capacity of a seer or prophet, and he makes his dialogue strikingly dramatic by contrasting the quietude of the master and his pupil with the troubled times which lie ahead of Lady Jane. This is not a mere desultory conversation, but a “dramatic dialogue” in the best sense.

Similar careful preparation must have been made for the writing of the second dialogue—an investigation into the outward lives of Johnson, Reynolds, and Shenstone, their personal characteristics, tastes, opinions, weaknesses, and prejudices, as well as their

achievements. Shenstone's ballad is the centre of the piece, and is skilfully worked into the story, for the conversation is really a narrative rather than an account of a dramatic situation like Landor's dialogue.

### EXERCISE XX

1. Write an imaginary dialogue (without any narrative) between Shakespeare and any other author with whose works you have some acquaintance.
2. Imagine that a river and a willow growing on its bank can talk to each other. Write down part of their conversation.
3. Write a conversation between the shade of Macbeth and that of Brutus who helped to kill Cæsar.
4. Write out an argument between a brother and sister as to the best way of spending an unexpected half-holiday together.
5. Imagine that you met the Prime Minister, and that he talked with you. Write down your conversation.
6. Invent a dialogue between King Edward I. and William Wallace.
7. Imagine that a canal and a river come within speaking distance of each other, and make them discuss their work in the service of man.
8. Dispute with some one who disagrees with you the value of fairy tales.

[N.B.—Nos. 7 and 8 are really new and much more interesting ways of writing an essay on Canals and Fairy Tales respectively.]

9. Suppose that the subject proposed for composition is Music in Nature. Attempt a conversation between the Thrush as representing the birds, the River as representing the music of water; and the Wind.

10. Write out an argument between A and B on the use of the historical novel as an aid to history.
11. The subject for composition at a recent public examination was "The Furniture of a House as an Index of Character." Make an attempt to deal with it as a dialogue.
12. Write a dialogue between a carpenter and a bricklayer about the advantages and disadvantages of their respective callings.

## CHAPTER X.—ON ANSWERING QUESTIONS

§ 35. **Missing the Point.**—The following question (or exercise) is copied exactly from a paper set at a recent public examination. The examiners took pains to emphasize certain words by the use of italic type.

Choose any *five* of the following *pairs* of words. Write *five* sentences, each containing one of the five pairs you have chosen, so composed that there can be no mistake about the meaning.

Recourse	Resource
Anomalous	Anonymous
Deprecate	Depreciate
Venal	Venial
Elicit	Illicit
Pose	Poise
Adapt	Adopt

In spite of the italics many candidates wrote ten sentences; for example, the first pair of words might give rise to—

The surgeon had recourse to tracheotomy.

As a last resource he applied to his father.

Thus the point of the exercise was entirely missed by these particular candidates, to whom no marks were awarded in spite of the fact that they thought and wrote a good deal. A few minutes spent in careful consideration of the actual exercise proposed would have saved the situation. Here the point was “five sentences each containing a pair.”

In the same examination the following exercise was proposed :—

Discuss briefly the part that is played by the fairies in the development of the plot of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Many candidates developed the plot, by no means briefly, and included the fairies, instead of concentrating their thoughts upon the "little people" and looking at the plot from the point of view of the effect of the fairies upon the doings of the mortals. Here the point was "the fairies' effect on the plot," and it was missed for lack of careful thought.

§ 36. **Sticking to the Point.**—Another question from the same paper ran as follows:—

Construct from *Richard II.*, with brief illustrations, what you think was Shakespeare's view of the king's faults.

In this case the examiners might have been better advised to ask for "brief quotations," but they are not to be blamed for the fact that many candidates gave a good description of Richard's character, both virtues and faults, as revealed by Shakespeare, and left the examiners to disentangle the latter.

Another exercise ran as follows:—

Describe and illustrate briefly the emotions which Browning expresses in (a) *Home Thoughts from Abroad* and (b) *Home Thoughts from the Sea*.

Here the point lies in the word "emotions," but many candidates enlarged also upon the descriptive power shown by the poet in these particular poems.

§ 37. **Verbosity.**—An answer to an examination question is valuable, other things being equal, in direct proportion to its brevity, and not to the amount of paper covered. Words, phrases, clauses, and sentences which are obvious "fill ups" should be rigidly avoided. Sentences should be crisp and definite, and paragraphs clearly differentiated. No attempt should be made to disguise ignorance or to hide it behind a barrier of words.

## EXERCISE XXI

1. What is the " point " (or " points ") of each of the following :—

(a) Discuss briefly the statement that Caliban is neither a " comic " nor a " tragic " character.

(b) Quote *one* song of *The Tempest* ; give the first line of *three* others ; and in each case describe briefly the occasion on which the song is sung.

(c) Describe with brief illustrations the witty encounters between Beatrice and Benedick, and compare them with anything similar in any book or play you have read.

(d) Illustrate from *Richard II.* the relations between king and nobles, and between the nobles themselves as Shakespeare represents them.

(e) Describe the Elizabethan theatre and the conditions under which plays were presented there.

(f) Examine any *two* poems on the same or a similar subject by different poets, in order to contrast their modes of treatment.

(g) Show from *The Ancient Mariner* how Coleridge rouses and maintains an interest in the supernatural.

(h) Set out briefly the part that allegory plays in (1) *Comus*, (2) *Samson Agonistes*.

(i) Give the *subject-matter* of any *one* of Milton's sonnets dealing with his own history, and show how the main idea is developed.

(j) Quote, with context, any *five* brief passages from these essays which show Goldsmith's sense of humour.

(k) Set out what Goldsmith has to say about EITHER *A Visit to Beau Tibbs*, OR *A Coronation*.

2. Criticize and, if necessary, correct the following answer given to the question—

Describe and exemplify the qualities of King Alfred as a monarch.

## ANSWER.

King Alfred's qualities as a monarch might be summed up in the following convenient form, which is so arranged for purposes of ready reference.

(a) *Personal Bravery*.—As we all know, Alfred was personally very brave. Though he is said to have been physically weak, and was frequently sick and ill, he took a personal part in the battles against the Danes, exposing himself to every danger, and sharing the perils which his soldiers were obliged to face, with undaunted courage.

(b) *Gift of Leadership*.—Alfred was no mere “son of a king,” and therefore a king by inheritance, ruling by right of birth, apart from any personal qualifications for his high office. He was a born leader, and therefore a true king according to the Old English idea of a monarch.

(c) *Pater Patria* (father of the country or of his people).—As a true father cares for his children, fostering, protecting, and defending them as well as giving them strength to walk alone, so King Alfred never spared himself in fatherly devotion to his people. He made laws to protect the weak against the strong, always in favour of those who were “innocent and oppressed”; he punished wrongdoers with justice tempered with mercy; he helped and encouraged scholars and learned men, and either wrote and translated books or had them done under his guidance and close supervision; he laboured for the defence of his country both by sea and land; and he set an example of devotion to duty and loyalty to the State which was much more valuable than many precepts.

(d) *Sense of Humour*.—The well-known stories told of this monarch, and now discredited by serious historians, prove, at all events, that King Alfred had a sense of humour, and did not insist upon his own dignity; also that his family affections were true and strong.

3. Describe the qualities of a good written answer to an examination question.
4. Summarize the dangers to be avoided in answering questions.

## CHAPTER XI.—ON EXPRESSION BY TALKING

§ 38. **Writing a Bore.**—There are many active people to whom writing is a weariness to the flesh, and for whom the “throes of composition” are very real. Some of them prefer to express their thoughts by talking. Instead of writing laboriously in bookish style the tale of the Sun and the Wind, they would rather say something like this—

The sun and the wind once made a bet. It was about a man and his overcoat. They agreed he would be better without that coat. Which could make him take it off the sooner? The wind had the first try. He walked round to the north-east and let go. The man turned up his velvet collar. Then the sun tried. “Phew!” said the man, “I wish I hadn’t brought that coat.” The sun persisted a little more. The coat came off. Gently did it!

Now if every talker talked like this we should probably not read or write so much. Of course the precise person would sneer at the above as “colloquial,” but it is very attractive as talk, nevertheless, and (to continue being colloquial) it takes a bit of doing.

### EXERCISE XXII

1. Tell orally each of the following stories in colloquial style, without vulgarity or slang, both of which are almost entirely missing from the

above example. Imagine that you are speaking to some jolly children.

(a) Hare mocks at tortoise because of slowness (" You are an old slow-coach," etc.). Tortoise challenges hare to race, fox to be umpire. Accepts. Start made. Hare goes so fast thinks he can take a nap—but too long. Awakes and calls for tortoise, who answers from winning-post.

(b) Wise old cock on tree branch. Enter fox. All animals should be friends ; come down to embrace. Cock overjoyed to hear it, especially from fox ; and here come two hounds racing along, keen to be friends too ; when they arrive the cock will come down. Fox reconsiders. Will not wait. Peace treaty could be postponed. Exit. Cock laughs.

(c) Hot day. Fox thirsty. Sees grapes overhanging wall. Tries to reach them ; much too high. Again and yet again ; no result. Grapes sour.

(d) Ambitious crow sees eagle carrying off sheep. Flew round flock and selected fattest ; pounced down like an eagle ! Heavier than expected. Fleece much tangled. Shepherd appears. Crow in a cage.

(e) Lion asleep. Mouse ran over. Caught. Asked pardon ; won't do it again, and will repay some day ! (Laughter from lion.) Later, caught in net. Mouse appears ; nibbles knots, and sets lion free before hunter comes.

2. Put each of the following phrases into a conversational sentence :—

pay the piper ; mince matters ; break the ice ; set one's teeth on edge ; peg away ; the cold shoulder ; show the white feather ; tit for tat ; all at sea ; sixes and sevens ; six of one and half a dozen of the other ; a chip of the old block ; penny wise and pound foolish ; spoilt the ship for a ha'porth of tar ; born with a silver spoon in his mouth ; as broad as it's long ; by hook or by crook ; a storm in a teacup ; it's up to me.

§ 39. **Things seen and overheard.**—The member of a household who can come home and give a good

description of something arresting or amusing seen or overheard is always welcomed, but the narration must be well done. The speaker must try to make the verbal picture as clear as possible without overloading the narration with irrelevant detail; must avoid "fill-up" phrases like "you know," "and—er," "and that sort of thing"; must be homely and familiar without being vulgar or pert; and must, as a rule, tell only of pleasant experiences, especially avoiding a mere recital of personal grievances.

### EXERCISE XXIII

1. Describe something interesting or amusing which you have recently seen.
2. Tell of something amusing which you have recently overheard.
3. Continue the following:—
  - (a) Last night I was standing near the garden gate when I saw something move quickly across the road . . .
  - (b) At nine o'clock this morning a ragged man came into our street . . .
  - (c) I answered a knock on our back door this afternoon, and found a small ragged boy standing in the side-way . . .
4. Describe your last visit to a cinema, theatre, or concert.

**§ 40. Speeches and Lectures.**—Those who prefer telling about a thing to writing about it must to some extent follow the same plan as those who undertake the writing of an essay or an article. There must be the same careful collection of information and note-making, and the speech or lecture must be rehearsed either in private or in the presence of a critical but helpful and sympathetic listener. The speaker or lecturer must also try to express his own individuality, otherwise his hearers will soon become bored, however interesting his subject may be in itself.

Few speakers can dispense with notes, nor is it necessary that they should do so, provided that only casual reference is needed. The appeal of a speech or lecture depends largely upon the speaker's voice, manner, posture, and gesture. It is difficult to give rules about these things. One writer says that a speaker should cultivate "the voice which holds out the meaning of what is said as one holds out fruit to a child." A great deal depends upon health and physical condition. No voice can be pleasant, crisp, and clear if the speaker has not been trained to breathe properly, and suffers, as a consequence, from chronic catarrh.

An attractive manner in speaking is as difficult to define as it is to acquire. It is probably a gift ; but something can be achieved by self-forgetfulness, coupled with a sincere desire to please and entertain one's audience. The posture should be easy without slouching, and gestures few and far between. Go frequently to public meetings and study these matters. You will find the inquiry full of interest and amusement, apart from the subject-matter of the speeches.

#### EXERCISE XXIV

1. Stand up and speak each of the following sentences rather quickly, without slurring or gabbling :—

Well, what do you think about it all ? The British Constitution is an accumulation of custom and precedent. I must leave next Tuesday, and the train starts at ten o'clock. You are wanted at the telephone, Mr. Smithson speaking. She says that I must not speak to you at all. We've often heard that it's all his own fault. Try to count twenty in ten seconds. I'll let you know in a few days. Come and talk to me to-morrow night. Go at once and ask permission. Thus conscience doth make cowards of us all, and thus the native hue of resolution is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought.

2. What do you usually do with your hands when you stand up to speak? What does your neighbour do?
3. Have you any favourite gesture in speaking?
4. Under what headings would you speak on each of the following subjects?—
  - (a) School Examinations. (b) How to keep Fit. (c) Silence is Golden. (d) The Abatement of Modern Noise.
  - (e) Your Favourite School Subject. (f) Your Favourite Recreation.
5. Ask the question “What do you think about that?” in four different ways by stressing different words.
6. Say “Come here” (1) imperatively, (2) coaxingly, (3) threateningly.
7. What notes would a speaker require for making each of the speeches printed on pages 243 to 255.

[N.B.—Read these two speeches very critically. They are by no means perfect in the matter of clearness of expression. Nor will you find it easy to make notes upon them.]

8. What is the difference between a speech and a lecture?
9. Distinguish orally between: one hundred years *and* one hundred jeers; she has taken up Art *and* she has taken a part; a very nice speech *and* a very nice peach; take care *and* take air; a single egg *and* a single leg; the orator's tongue *and* the orator stung; make clean *and* make lean.

§ 41. **The Debater.**—Debate is to the speaker what dialogue or dramatic conversation is to the writer. The speeches of debaters are usually short, and only the leaders or openers can make full preparation. Those who follow them have the harder task, for

they must be ready to deal at once with the points raised by those who have led the way.

The competent debater is cool and even tempered. He keeps strictly to the point of the argument ; speaks clearly and simply ; shows sincerity and conviction ; replies to his opponents point by point ; avoids worn-out phrases and catch-words ; is alert and quick in retort without being pert ; and has a good stock of "beginnings" and illustrations—stories, fables, parables, and homely comparisons.

The last-named qualification is important. Let us suppose that the subject of the debate is—

*Shall we refrain from showing kindness in order to protect ourselves from ingratitude?*

It is difficult and useless to argue about such a theme in an abstract way, and much better to begin with a story like the following :—

A homeless Mother Hound with a small family persuaded a friend to allow her to occupy her kennel. After some time the friend wished to return to her own dwelling. "Oh, do give me a little more time," said the Mother Hound. "My young ones can scarcely crawl, and I don't know what I shall do with them if I have to go out into the cruel world again." The kind friend agreed to wait, but after a time appeared again to take possession of her rightful home. But this time the Mother Hound showed her teeth and snarled, "I am quite ready to go, my friend, with all my family, *if you can turn us out.*"

### EXERCISE XXV

1. What subject for debate could be introduced by means of the story of : (1) The Hare and the Tortoise ; (2) The Old Man and the Bundle of Sticks ; (3) The Fox and the Grapes ; (4) The Lion and the Mouse ; (5) The Crow that would be an Eagle.

2. Write down Notes in preparation for a debate on one of the following subjects :—

- (a) Is newspaper reading always advantageous ?
- (b) Ought every boy to become a Scout ?
- (c) Is it better to be a king or a subject ?
- (d) Is wealth an unmixed blessing ?
- (e) Should attendance at Continuation Schools be compulsory ?
- (f) Does city life or country life afford the better preparation for a successful career ?
- (g) Ought one *always* to keep smiling ?
- (h) How far are we to sympathize with Macbeth or Lady Macbeth ?

3. Study the newspapers to find out subjects of debate recently raised in Parliament, or County or Borough Council. Select one subject, and prepare notes for taking part in a school debate upon it.

4. Write a report or précis of some debate to which you have recently listened without taking any active part in the discussion.

5. Tell of some neat instance of repartee or retort of which you have heard, or which has come within your own experience.

[N.B.—Boswell's *Life of Johnson* is a mine of good things of this kind (see No. 39 of this Series).]

6. Stand up and finish a story which began as follows :—

(a) One wet, windy day John was walking down the street. His mother was with him carrying an umbrella . . .

(b) A maid took up a pair of steps and went to clean a window . . .

(c) A bullock was one day being led by a rope down a busy street . . .

(d) One morning I found a wet, miserable-looking dog crouching near the front door of our house . . .

7. Express yourself orally for two minutes only on one of the following subjects :—

- (a) Sir Francis Drake's dealings with the Spaniards.
- (b) "Theirs not to reason why."
- (c) Team work.
- (d) Courtesy of railway travelling.
- (e) I never pluck the rose ; the violet's head  
Hath shaken with my breath upon its bank  
And not reproached me ; the ever-sacred cup  
Of the pure lily hath between my hands  
Felt safe, unsoil'd, nor lost one grain of gold.

W. S. LANDOR.

## CHAPTER XII.—EXPRESSION IN VERSE

§ 42. **Poeta nascitur non fit.**—Not one of us, by taking thought, can make himself a poet ; and when R. L. Stevenson quotes some one's saying that "a poet has died young in the breast of the most stolid" he is not pleading with each of us to make a strenuous effort to bring the deceased bard back to life again. Those who love the best poetry most deeply are least inclined to make an attempt to imitate it ; and civilized social life has no greater infliction than the would-be poet who insists upon reading his verses aloud.

This may seem sufficiently discouraging for those who feel drawn to the expression of their thoughts in metre. But it will be noted that it is the poet who is born, not the verse-maker. It is not easy to draw the line between poetry and verse ; but it will be safe to say that what you produce (if you produce anything) after attempting some of the exercises proposed in this chapter will be verse. If you should happen to do yourself some injustice, let others who know inform you of the fact.

§ 43. **Cui bono ?**—Why, then, should any one who is not a born poet try to express himself in verse ? There are several good reasons for making the attempt. We cannot even make a beginning without learning a great deal about the mechanism of verse ; and this will provide good mental discipline and help us to appreciate the work of poets more highly. We shall train the ear to the measured beat of lines of verse, and be able to detect faults in rhythm. We

shall learn to appreciate the musical beauty of language, to look for the higher thought which alone is worthy of expression in metre. We shall also train ourselves in the exact use of words, for of all composers the poet must be most careful to employ *le mot juste*; while the precise nature of verse mechanism makes him avoid the use of padding or circumlocution. On the other hand, we shall find that there is a "poetic language," which ought to be used only in verse, and rarely, if ever, employed in good prose.

#### § 44. The Structure of Verse.—Consider the lines—

- (1) This royal throne of kings, this sceptred isle,  
This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars.
- (2) The modest water, aw'd by pow'r divine,  
Beheld its God and blush'd itself to wine.

If we were asked what it is that distinguishes these lines from prose, we could not say that it was rhyme, for the first couplet from Shakespeare's *Richard II* does not rhyme. We find, however, after reading the lines carefully and aloud, that they seem to march in step, or to have a measured beat, or rhythm. This may be made clearer if the lines are set down thus:—

- (1) This roy' | al throne' | of kings', | this scep' | tred i'sle, |  
This earth' | of maj' | esty', | this seat' | of Mars'.
- (2) The mod' | est wa' | ter aw'd' | by pow'r' | divine', |  
Beheld' | its God' | and blush'd' | itself' | to wine'.

The upright marks show the division of the lines into what are known as poetic *feet*, each of which in these examples consists of two syllables. The mark ' shows which syllable is spoken with stress or emphasis, or what is loosely called accent. Because of this regular arrangement of syllables poetry or verse is said to be written in metre, or measure.

## EXERCISE XXVI

Find out the stressed or accented syllables in the following lines (do not expect all lines of verse to be as regular as the above) :—

- (1) Go down to Kew in lilac-time, in  
lilac-time,  
Go down to Kew in lilac-time (it isn't far from  
London).
- (2) I know the sky will fall one day,  
The great green trees will topple down.
- (3) I saw her plucking cowslips,  
And marked her where she stood.
- (4) It is as hard to come as for a camel  
To thread the postern of a needle's eye.
- (5) Thank God for sleep in the long quiet night,  
For the clear day calling through the little leaded  
panes.
- (6) Last night the wind went sweet south-west,  
Rocking and singing the world to rest.
- (7) Half a league, half a league,  
Half a league onward.

§ 45. **Poetic Feet.**—It is helpful to classify the various kinds of poetic feet, which are six in number.  
• Study the stressed syllables in the words—

complete'	lemonade'
walk'ing	hur'rying
oat'-cake'	defy'ing

These words may be taken as examples of the six chief kinds of poetic feet, but we must remember that in a line of poetry a foot may be made up of syllables from two or more adjacent words. Certain names are given to these kinds of feet.

Iambus—complete' (˘ ˘). Anapæst—lemonade' (˘ ˘ ˘).  
Trochee—walk'ing (˘ ˘). Dactyl—hur'rying (˘ ˘ ˘).  
Spondee—oat'-cake' (˘ ˘). Amphibrach—defy'ing (˘ ˘ ˘).

In the above markings the hyphen denotes a “long” or stressed syllable, the small curve an unstressed syllable. In constructing his metrical or rhythmic lines the poet tries to make the stress fall on the syllable which would be stressed in prose, but this is not always possible.

The line of verse is named according to the number of feet it contains—

Monometer	= one foot.	Tetrameter	= four feet.
Dimeter	= two feet.	Pentameter	= five feet.
Trimeter	= three feet.	Hexameter	= six feet.

Note that any of these lines may have an extra syllable. The meaning of a phrase like “iambic pentameter” will now be clear. This line is one of the commonest in English poetry—

’Tis not enough no harshness gives offence,  
The sound must seem an echo to the sense.

### EXERCISE XXVII

Read the following passages aloud, dividing the lines into feet, and marking the stressed syllables :—

- (1) The cloud-capped tow’rs, the gorgeous palaces,  
The solemn temples, the great Globe itself,  
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,  
And like this insubstantial pageant faded,  
Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff  
As dreams are made on ; and our little life  
Is rounded with a sleep.
- (2) When captains courageous, whom death could not  
daunt,  
Did march to the siege of the city of Gaunt,  
They muster’d their soldiers by two and by three,  
And the foremost in battle was Mary Ambree.
- (3) Breathes there the man, with soul so dead,  
Who never to himself hath said,  
This is my own, my native land ?

(4) Just then Clarissa drew with tempting grace  
 A two-edged weapon from her shining case :  
 So Ladies in Romance assist their Knight,  
 Present the spear, and arm him for the fight.

(5) The Jackdaw sat on the Cardinal's chair !  
 Bishop and abbot and prior were there ;  
 Many a monk, and many a friar,  
 Many a knight, and many a squire.

(6) Have you heard of the wonderful one-horse-shay  
 That was built in such a logical way  
 It ran a hundred years to a day ?

(7) Oh, I am a cook and a captain bold,  
 And the mate of the *Nancy* brig,  
 And a bosun tight and a midshipmite,  
 And the crew of the captain's gig.

§ 46. **Freedom in Fetters.**—The poet carries the fetters of metre, but he is not a slave. He occasionally breaks away and varies the regular rhythm in order to avoid a mechanical sing-song, sometimes adding an extra syllable, occasionally using a different kind of foot, and employing lines of different lengths. In studying the foot in the above exercise it has been necessary to exaggerate the stresses, but that is not done when a good reader is reading poetry. He follows the sense, and finds that in the best poetry the sound can take care of itself. A rigid marking of the stresses mars the beauty of a passage like the following :—

The current that with gentle murmur glides,  
 Thou know'st, being stopt impatiently doth rage,  
 But when his fair course is not hindered,  
 He makes sweet music with the enamell'd stones,  
 Giving a gentle kiss to every sedge  
 He overtaketh in his pilgrimage ;  
 And so, by many winding nooks he strays  
 With willing sport to the wild ocean.

Note, for example, how poor an effect is obtained by reading the last line with rigid stresses—

With will' | ing sport' | to the' | wild o' | cean'.

Further, we must take note of the natural pause which occurs in most lines of English verse,\* and which is fixed by the meaning of the words, a pause which has nothing to do with mechanical metre. This pause is marked by an upright line in the following :—

I know a bank | where the wild thyme blows,  
Where oxlips | and the nodding violet grows.

There is a pleasure | in the pathless woods,  
There is a rapture | on the lonely shore.

There is a willow | grows aslant a brook  
That shows his hoar leaves | in the glassy stream.

### EXERCISE XXVIII

Indicate the natural pause in each line of the following :—

- (1) Above the pines the moon was slowly drifting,  
The river sang below.
- (2) O Day, most calm, most bright,  
The fruit of this, the next world's bud.
- (3) Good people all, of every sort,  
Give ear unto my song ;  
And if you find it wondrous short,  
It cannot hold you long.
- (4) Come live with me and be my love,  
And we will all the pleasures prove  
That valleys, groves, and hills, and fields,  
Woods or steepy mountains yields.
- (5) Now came still evening on, and twilight grey  
Had in her sober livery all things clad ;  
Silence accompanied ; for beast and bird,  
They to their grassy couch, these to their nests,  
Were slunk, all but the wakeful nightingale,  
She all night long her amorous descant sung.

\* Not in the shortest lines as a rule.

§ 47. **Simpler Verse Patterns.**—A mere glance at a book of poetry is sufficient to show what a great variety of forms is employed by English poets. Sometimes the page is filled with long lines without a break, and on other pages we find the lines grouped in threes, fours, sixes, and other numbers, the length of the lines also showing great variety. Strictly speaking, a “verse” is a single rhythmic line, the name being derived from the Latin *versus*, which means a turning; but the term is now often used to denote an ordered collection of lines which may more properly be named a stanza. The various forms have names of their own. Consider the following :—

**HEROIC MEASURE.**—This is the famous iambic pentameter, the line of Chaucer, Spenser, Dryden, Pope, and Shakespeare. It may be rhymed in couplets, as in—

To Him no high, no low, no great, no small,  
He fills, He bounds, connects, and equals all.

Atoms or systems into ruin hurled,  
And now a bubble burst, and now a world.—POPE.

Or it may be unrhymed, when it becomes **BLANK VERSE,\*** as in—

The quality of mercy is not strained ;  
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heav'n  
Upon the place beneath. It is twice bless'd :  
It blesseth him that gives and him that takes.

SHAKESPEARE.

So all day long the noise of battle rolled  
Among the mountains by the winter sea,  
Until King Arthur's Table, man by man,  
Had fallen in Lyonesse about their lord,  
King Arthur.

TENNYSON.

\* Introduced into English poetry by the Earl of Surrey (died 1547).

The student who wishes to write narrative verse should begin with the unrhymed iambic pentameter or deca-syllabic line.

**ROMANTIC MEASURE.**—This is a name sometimes given to the iambic tetrameter, such as Scott uses in his narrative poems, though he broke its somewhat monotonous flow by the use of frequent rhymed trimeters.

Still pouring down the rocky den  
 Where flows the sullen Till,  
 And rising from the dim-wood glen,  
 Standards on standards, men on men,  
 In slow succession still,  
 And sweeping o'er the Gothic arch,  
 And pressing on in ceaseless march,  
 To gain the opposing hill.

**FOUR-LINE STANZA.**—This takes several forms—for example, *Ballad Stanza*. This usually consists of two iambic tetrameters alternating with two iambic trimeters, the latter rhyming—for example:—

With that there came an arrow keen  
 Out of an English bow,  
 Which struck Earl Douglas to the heart  
 A deep and deadly blow.

The modern ballad (or ballad poem) stanza may be trochaic—for example:—

Tell me not in mournful numbers,  
 Life is but an empty dream,  
 For the soul is dead that slumbers,  
 And things are not what they seem.

This is rather more regular and finished than the old ballad stanza, which had many variations and was often rough in structure.

*Elegiac Stanza* (an elegy is a mournful or solemn poem). Iambic pentameters rhyming alternately, as in—

Full many a gem of purest ray serene,  
 The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear ;  
 Full many a flow'r is born to blush unseen,  
 And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

GRAY.

Still more finished and perfect is the *Tennysonian Stanza*. This is used in *In Memoriam*, and consists of iambic tetrameters, the first rhyming with the fourth, and the second with the third—for example :—

Ring out the grief that saps the mind,  
 For those that here we see no more ;  
 Ring out the feud of rich and poor,  
 Ring in redress to all mankind.

## EXERCISE XXIX

I. Suppose that you wish to express yourself in verse on “Friendship.” This is a reflective, serious, but cheerful subject, and the unrhymed iambic pentameter, or blank verse, would be a suitable medium. Here is Shakespeare on “Comfort” or “True Happiness”—

Gives not the hawthorn bush a sweeter shade  
 To shepherds looking on their silly sheep,  
 Than doth a rich embroidered canopy  
 To kings that fear their subjects’ treachery ?

Following this pattern, you might begin—

Is not a true friend dearer than a store  
 Of hoarded gold denied the light of day,  
 And sweeter than the sound of flattering tongues ?

Try to continue the lines.

2. Use a four-line ballad stanza to tell the story of the Cock and the Fox. You might begin—

A cunning fox one morning spied  
 A cockerel in a tree ;  
 " Well met, good friend ! " he promptly cried.  
 " Now hearken unto me."

## 3. Use the lines—

There is a willow grows aslant a brook  
 That shows his hoar leaves in the glassy stream,

to write a few lines on a blasted pine tree on  
 the top of a hill.

4. The following was written by a boy of thirteen.  
 It forms a poetic " thing seen," the inspiration  
 being drawn from a well-known tale of  
 Chaucer.

There was a maid most beautiful,  
 Her name was Emelie ;  
 Her hair was braided down her back,  
 And fell down to her knee.

There were two men in the great stone tower  
 Who gazed on Emelie  
 Picking sweet flowers, both white and red,  
 To deck her head with glee.

Try to write two or three stanzas on the above pattern telling of the captive James I. of Scotland catching his first glimpse of the Lady Joan Beaufort in a garden from his window in Windsor Castle.

## 5. Write a letter to a friend in the ballad stanza.

[*N.B.*—In all your attempts at verse composition, choose first of all a verse pattern which you think suited to your subject.]

§ 48. **More Complicated Verse Patterns.**—Besides the iambic pentameter, rhymed and unrhymed, and the four-line stanza of several kinds, you will find in any representative book of standard and modern

poetry a bewildering variety of verse forms. Poets of the time of Tennyson and Browning kept, on the whole, to recognized patterns, but the more modern poets refuse to be bound by conventional "form," and write as they will. We can find stanzas of two, three, five, six, seven, eight, up to fourteen lines, often with lines of varying length and construction, some poems rhymed, others entirely without rhyme, along with specimens of "free verse," which some one has described as "prose chopped up into pieces." Some of these verse forms have recognized names, others are nameless. If our immediate object is expression in verse it is useless to burden our memories with names like triplet, roundel, rondeau, ballade, terza rima, rhyme-royal, villanelle, and the rest. Our best plan is to find a pattern that pleases our ear, and having chosen a subject, to begin our imitative exercise. One dignified and ancient form, however, known as the sonnet, we shall consider separately (see § 49, page 121).

### EXERCISE XXX

Study the following verse patterns. Select one which pleases you, and express yourself on some kindred subject; or, if you will, write a parody or mocking imitation (or perversion).

(1) O wild West Wind, thou breath of Autumn's being,  
Thou, from whose unseen presence the leaves dead  
Are driven, like ghosts from an enchanter fleeing,

Yellow, and black, and pale, and hectic red,  
Pestilence-stricken multitudes : O thou  
Who chariotest to their dark wintry bed . . .

SHELLEY.

[Note that the sense of the lines runs over the ends of

the stanzas. Try the North Wind, or the East Wind in this form. No limit is set to length !]

(2) On the fairest day of June  
 You may go, with sun or moon,  
 Or the seven stars to light you,  
 Or the polar ray to right you ;  
 But you never may behold  
 Little John, or Robin Bold :  
 Never one, of all the clan,  
 Thrumming on an empty can  
 Some old hunting ditty, while  
 He doth his green way beguile  
 To fair hostess Merriment,  
 Down beside the pasture Trent ;  
 For he left the merry tale  
 Messenger for spicy ale.

KEATS.

The above is from the poem *Robin Hood*. Try this rhyming metre for a subject like "The Good Old Times," or "Merrie England." The so-called stanzas may be of any length.

(3) I heard a linnet courting  
 His lady in the spring :  
 His mates were idly sporting, .....  
 Nor stayed to hear him sing  
 His song of love. .....  
 I fear my speech distorting .....  
 His tender love.

ROBERT BRIDGES.

Try the above stanza for a poem of at least one or two stanzas on a bird or on a puppy, according as you feel sentimental or jolly.

4) Tell you a story, children ? Well, gather around my knee,  
 And I'll see if I can thrill you (though you're torpid after your tea),

With a moving tale of a shipwreck ; and—should you  
refrain from sleep,  
For the cake was a trifle heavy—I flatter myself you'll  
weep.

The above is “mock heroic” in style—the metre is hexametric, a very uncommon measure in English poetry. Try the pattern for stanzas descriptive of some exciting event, such as the turning out of the Fire Brigade.

(5) Wild fawn, wild fawn,  
Hast seen the Green Lady ?  
The merles are singing,  
The ferns are springing,  
The little leaves whisper from dusk to dawn—  
Green Lady ! Green Lady !  
The little leaves whisper from dusk to dawn—  
Wild fawn, wild fawn !

FIONA MACLEOD.

The above looks easier than it is. Try the measure beginning with the words “Hobgoblin, Hobgoblin !”

(6) Up the airy mountain,  
Down the rushy glen,  
We daren’t go a-hunting  
In fear of little men ;  
Wee folk, good folk,  
Trooping all together ;  
Green jacket, red cap,  
And white owl’s feather !

WILLIAM ALLINGHAM.

Try the above stanza for a song of the fairies or a description of their doings.

(7) O mighty-mouthed inventor of harmonies,  
O skilled to sing of Time and Eternity,  
God-gifted organ-voice of England,  
Milton, a name to resound for ages.

TENNYSON.

Try the foregoing for an invocation to King Alfred, or Joan of Arc, or some other great figure of history.

(8) There was a child went forth every day ;  
 And the first object he looked upon, that object he  
 became ;  
 And that object became part of him for the day, or a  
 certain part of the day, or for many years, or  
 stretching cycles of years.  
 The early lilacs became part of this child,  
 And grass, and white and red " morning glories," and  
 white and red clover, and the song of the phœbe-  
 bird,  
 And the Third-month lambs, and the sow's pink-  
 faint litter, and the mare's foal, and the cow's  
 calf,  
 And the noisy brood of the barn-yard, or by the mire  
 of the pond-side,  
 And the fish suspending themselves so curiously below  
 there—and the beautiful curious liquid,  
 And the water-plants with their graceful flat heads—  
 all became part of him.                   WALT WHITMAN.

The above is free verse. How does it differ from ordinary poetry and from prose ? Write lines of free verse on the qualities necessary for a leader of men.

The foregoing exercises are merely suggestive. Any poetry book will provide patterns for other attempts at poetic expression.

§ 49. **The Sonnet Pattern.**—The sonnet is at once delightful and difficult. It consists of fourteen lines, with rhymes interlaced in various ways. Only the great poets have excelled in the composition of the sonnet.

In the following example Wordsworth follows the Italian model (that of the poet Petrarch), which consists of two parts, the octave (eight lines) and the sestette (six lines)—for example :—

Octave

Earth has not anything to show more fair, (a)  
 Dull would he be of soul who could pass by (b)  
 A sight so touching in its majesty. (b)  
 This city now doth like a garment wear (a)  
 The beauty of the morning ; silent, bare (a)  
 Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie (b)  
 Open unto the fields and to the sky, (b)  
 All bright and glittering in the smokeless air. (a)

Sestette

Never did sun more beautifully sleep (c)  
 In its first splendour, valley, rock, or hill; (d)  
 Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep; (c)  
 The river glideth at his own sweet will : (d)  
 Dear God ! the very houses seem asleep, (c)  
 And all that mighty heart is lying still. (d)

The line in the above is the iambic pentameter.

Milton also followed the Italian model, but Shakespeare's sonnet is in three independent quatrains (four lines), concluding with a couplet—for example :—

Let me not to the marriage of true minds (a)  
 Admit impediments. Love is not love (b)  
 Which alters when it alteration finds, (a)  
 Or bends with the remover to remove. (b)

Oh, no ! it is an ever fixèd mark (c)  
 That looks on tempests and is never shaken ; (d)  
 It is the star to every wandering bark— (c)  
 Whose worth's unknown although his height be taken. (d)

Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks (e)  
 Within his bending sickle's compass come ; (f)  
 Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks, (e)  
 But bears it out ev'n to the edge of doom. (f)

If this be error and upon me proved, (g)  
 I never writ, nor no man ever loved. (g)

When we read and study our sonnets we find that this form or pattern is used for the expression of grave or exalted thought. It seems hopeless for ordinary people to attempt the composition of such a poem,

but the exercise is fascinating and alluring, and if only one is produced in a lifetime after much effort, alteration, and careful polishing, a great deal has been achieved.

## EXERCISE XXXI

i. Study the construction of the following sonnets.

(Note that the meaning of the octave may run over into the sestette, or that of a quatrain into another quatrain or into the couplet.)

(1) It is not to be thought of that the flood

Of British freedom, which, to the open sea

Of the world's praise from dark antiquity

Hath flow'd "with pomp of waters unwithstood,"—

Rous'd though it be full often to a mood

Which spurns the check of salutary bands,—

That this most famous stream in bogs and sands

Should perish, and to evil and to good

Be lost for ever. In our halls is hung

Armoury of the invincible knights of old :

We must be free or die, who speak the tongue

That Shakespeare spake, the faith and morals hold

Which Milton held.—In everything we are sprung

Of Earth's first blood, have titles manifold.

WORDSWORTH.

(2) When I consider how my light is spent

Ere half my days, in this dark world and wide,

And that one talent which is death to hide,

Lodged with me useless, though my soul more bent

To serve therewith my Maker, and present

My true account, lest He returning chide ;

" Doth God exact day-labour, light denied ? "

I fondly ask : but Patience, to prevent

That murmur, soon replies : " God doth not need

Either man's work, or His own gifts ; who best

Bear His mild yoke, they serve Him best : His state

Is kingly ; thousands at His bidding speed,

And post o'er land and ocean without rest ;

They also serve who only stand and wait.

MILTON.

(3) Others abide our question. Thou art free.  
 We ask and ask—Thou smilest and art still,  
 Out-topping knowledge. For the loftiest hill,  
 Who to the stars uncrowns his majesty,  
 Planting his stedfast footsteps in the sea,  
 Making the heaven of heavens his dwelling-place,  
 Spares but the cloudy border of his base  
 To the foil'd searching of mortality :  
 And thou who didst the stars and sunbeams know,  
 Self-school'd, self-scann'd, self-honour'd, self-secure,  
 Didst tread on earth unguess'd at—better so !  
 All pains the immortal spirit must endure,  
 All weakness which impairs, all griefs which bow  
 Find their sole speech in that victorious brow.

ARNOLD.

2. Select a sonnet form, note the lines which must rhyme, and try to write a sonnet on some subject which stirs you deeply—it may be a lovely view, the expression of your thoughts about some crisis in your life, a description of your favourite hero or heroine in fiction, history, or real life, or an address to some one whom you love very dearly. Keep altering and polishing your sonnet until it satisfies you.

§ 50. **Poetic Workmanship.**—The true poet may be born, but he must always spend a great deal of time in studying the proper use of those devices which distinguish poetry from prose. He must know something about each of the following :—

**RHYME.**—As we have seen, rhyme is not absolutely necessary in the composition of verse, and not even of poetry. Milton spoke slightly of it, and did not use it in his great work. Critics tell us that Shakespeare showed his “’prentice hand” or was in his “immature period” when he used rhyme. Tennyson avoids it in his *Idylls of the King*, and Wordsworth in some of his finer efforts. Rhyme has its uses, however, especially in the lyric or musical poem, which

depends so largely upon sound for its effect ; and the great poets use it, sometimes very beautifully, in poems of this kind, showing their competence as craftsmen by the way it is introduced without spoiling or weakening the sense. Rhyme is loosely employed even by the masters, but the general rules are as follows :—

(a) Vowel sounds and final consonants must be the same, and the preceding consonants different : *ring, sing* ; *mind, kind* ; *dance, chance*. The second last syllables may also rhyme (and even the third from the end) : *ringing, singing* ; *minister, sinister* ; *fortunate, importunate*.

(b) Rhyming syllables must be accented : thus we rhyme *ring, sing*, but not with *pleas'ing*.

(c) Rhymes are allowable in which the vowel sound is slightly modified, as *war, car* ; *love, move* ; *sun, upon* ; but such rhymes are weak.

### EXERCISE XXXII

1. Write a rhyming line to each of the following :—

- (1) The sun is sinking in the west.
- (2) The gloating miser hoards his gold.
- (3) I know a garden fair to see.
- (4) Where shall we find the linnet ?
- (5) The sparrow twitters in the eaves.
- (6) There's music in the tree-tops.
- (7) Do you remember how the guns were taken ?

2. Study the rhymes in some of the poetical passages of this book.

SIMILE AND METAPHOR.—The poet is continually saying or suggesting that one thing is like another. When he says it openly he uses a *simile*—

Shrunk like a *fairy changeling* lay the sage.

When he suggests a likeness he uses a *metaphor*—

Then *in the boyhood* of the year.

These comparisons constitute one of the chief delights of poetry, and the best of our poets are distinguished by their use of beautiful similes and metaphors. Consider the following :—

Kate, like the hazel twig,  
Is straight and slender, and as brown in hue  
As hazel nuts, and sweeter than the kernels.

I'll say she looks as clear  
As morning roses newly washed with dew.

SHAKESPEARE.

As gentle  
As zephyrs blowing below the violet,  
Not wagging his sweet head.

SHAKESPEARE.

In Autumn low in the west is seen  
The moon with her sickle glittering keen.  
And first with her bright and narrow horn  
She reaps the rows of the rustling corn.  
In winter dusk, all sullen and red,  
The moon comes up, like a fire half-dead.

JOHN HALSHAM.

### EXERCISE XXXIII

1. Suggest a likeness to each of the following: a long fleecy cloud in a sunset sky; an ant heap; a white-cliffed islet in a calm blue sea; soldiers eager for the command to advance; the period of youth; the fall of an ambitious man.
2. Take a book of poems and search for twelve examples of the use of simile and of metaphor.

**SOUND BY SENSE.**—Sometimes the poet makes the sound match the sense. We do this in ordinary talk when we use such words as *hush*, *whistle*, *gallop*, *buzz*,

*smack, pop, whine*, and so on. Read each of the following passages aloud :—

The moan of doves in immemorial elms,  
The murmuring of innumerable bees.

TENNYSON.

The Minster clock has just *struck two*.

WORDSWORTH.

Down which she so often had tripped with her pail.

WORDSWORTH.

Hushed was that house in peace or seeming peace.

WORDSWORTH.

All to left and right,  
The bare black cliff changed round him, as he based  
His feet on juts of slippery crag that rang  
Sharp-smitten with the dint of armed heels—  
And on a sudden, lo ! the level lake,  
And the long glories of the winter moon.

TENNYSON.

OTHER FIGURES OF SPEECH.—The above device was known to the Ancient Greeks, who called it Onomatopicia. There are other figures of speech in the poet's stock-in-trade, some of them bearing equally forbidding names. Amongst the best known are—

*Personification*. Lifeless things or abstractions, and the lower animals spoken of as persons. For example :—

All the *trees* of the field shall *clap their hands*.

Bible.

Knowledge is proud that *he* has learned so much,  
Wisdom is humble that *he* knows no more.

COWPER.

*Antithesis*. A strong contrast.

Change the complexion of her maid-pale peace  
To scarlet indignation.

SHAKESPEARE.

*Metonymy.* The use of one word for another, or an allusion to something made by mentioning something connected with it. A metaphor is often implied. For example :—

Go to the rude *ribs* of that ancient castle.

SHAKESPEARE.

Here's *France* and *Burgundy*, my noble lord.

SHAKESPEARE.

*Climax.* A series of assertions, or exclamations, increasing in strength. For example :—

What a piece of work is man ! how noble in reason ; how infinite in faculties ; in form and moving, how express and admirable ; in action, how like an angel ; in apprehension, how like a god.

A descent in emphasis or meaning is an *anti-climax*. For example :—

But, masters, here are your parts. And I am to entreat you, request you, and desire you to con them by to-morrow night.

SHAKESPEARE.

*Oxymoron.* An apparent contradiction in terms.

I never heard  
So musical a discord, such sweet thunder.

SHAKESPEARE.

*Irony.* A kind of mockery. For example :—

A trim exploit, a manly enterprise,  
To conjure up tears in a poor maid's eyes.

SHAKESPEARE.

**§ 51. Poetic Language.** — Wordsworth began his poetic career by asserting that the language of the poet ought to be that of ordinary life, and he lived to write such lines as the following :—

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting ;  
The soul that riseth with us, our life's star,  
Hath had elsewhere its setting,  
And cometh from afar :

Not in entire forgetfulness, and not in utter nakedness,  
But trailing clouds of glory do we come  
From God, who is our home.

This is not the language of ordinary life, but the language of the life apart. The thought expressed is exalted and inspired, and the language matches it as English can do so well. The passage is packed full of beautiful metaphors and images expressed in melodious words and phrases. A speaker would be voted "affected" if he used the phrase "a forgetting" in ordinary life, but it does not jar us here. We never employ a verb like *riseth* in ordinary language, nor an adjective like *utter*—but try the substitution of *rises* and *complete* respectively. The more we study fine pieces of poetry the more clearly we see that the poet employs, and is permitted to employ, a language of his own, which if it were used in prose would be condemned as "flowery" and "affected." There are devices of prose and of oratory—metaphor, climax, contrast, irony—but the best prose writers and speakers use them sparingly, and when thought is exalted or emotion deeply stirred they invariably fall back on the poets and make more or less suitable quotations from them.

It is easier to distinguish poetic language than to define it. The best plan is to ask whether some word or phrase, or order of words, would be employed by a good prose writer or a speaker who knows the value of restraint and dignity. The following passages might be used for the inquiry :—

(1) Golden lads and girls all must  
As chimney-sweepers come to dust.

SHAKESPEARE.

(2) This is the state of man : to-day he puts forth  
The tender leaves of hope ; to-morrow blossoms,  
And bears his blushing honours thick upon him :  
The third day comes a frost, a killing frost ;

(2,606)

And—when he thinks, good easy man, full surely  
 His greatness is a-ripening—nips his root,  
 And then he falls, as I do.

SHAKESPEARE.

(3) There are in this loud stunning tide  
     Of human care and crime,  
     With whom the melodies abide  
     Of th' everlasting chime ;  
     Who carry music in their heart  
     Through dusky lane and wrangling mart ;  
     Plying their daily task with busier feet  
     Because their secret souls a holier strain repeat.

JOHN KEBLE.

(4) Thus with the year  
     Seasons return, but not to me returns  
     Day, or the sweet approach of even or morn,  
     Or sight of vernal bloom, or summer's rose,  
     Or flocks, or herds, or human face divine.

JOHN MILTON.

(5) How sleep the Brave, who sink to rest  
     By all their country's wishes blest :  
     When Spring with dewy fingers cold  
     Returns to deck their hallowed mould,  
     She there shall dress a sweeter sod  
     Than Fancy's feet have ever trod.

W. COLLINS.

(6) And a man shall be as a hiding-place from the wind,  
     And a covert from the tempest ;  
     As rivers of water in a dry ground,  
     As the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.

*Authorized Version.*

(7) Much have I travell'd in the realms of gold,  
     And many goodly states and kingdoms seen ;  
     Round many western islands have I been  
     Which bards in fealty to Apollo hold :  
     Oft of one wide expanse had I been told,  
     That deep-brow'd Homer ruled as his demesne :  
     Yet did I never breathe its pure serene  
     Till I heard Chapman speak out loud and bold :

Then felt I like some watcher of the skies  
 When a new planet swims into his ken ;  
 Or like stout Cortez when with eagle eyes  
 He stared at the Pacific—and all his men  
 Look'd at each other with a wild surmise—  
 Silent upon a peak in Darien.

## EXERCISE XXXIV

1. Study the following stanza by Lewis Carroll :—

I have a horse—a ryghte goode horse—  
 Ne doe I envye those  
 Who scour ye playne yn headye course  
 Tyll soddayne on theyre nose  
 They lyghte wyth unexpected force :  
 Yt ys—a horse of clothes.

Try to write a similar stanza about a “boxxe,” using the rhymes “feares,” “teares,” and “eares.”

2. An amusing story may provide material for a stanza. Consider the following :—

An Irishman, drilling a form, was getting on quite nicely, when he called them into a straight line. But he could not get a straight line. So at last he cried out in exasperation, “ Bah ! your line is as crooked as a corkscrew. All of ye fall out and have a look at it.”

Read the story again, trying to discover some portion which will suggest a rhythmic line—for example, “ Your line is as crooked as a corkscrew,” round which your stanza might be built.

3. Put the following into a stanza on the pattern of the old verses, “ Where are you going to, my pretty maid ? ” :—

*Old Lady.* And why are you crying, dear ?

*Little Girl.* My bruvver's broke my doll.

*Old Lady.* How did he do that ?

*Little Girl.* Wiv 'is 'ead, when I 'it 'im wiv it.

4. Use the following stories for verse composition :—

(1) Once a boy of about seven was trying to reach a high door knocker when an old gentleman was passing, and, seeing the boy, stopped and said, " Shall I knock for you, sonny ? "

" Yes, please, sir," said the boy.

So the man knocked.

" Now," said the boy, " you'd better run ! "

(2) A crowded excursion train drew up at a busy platform. A young dandy, walking on the platform, thought he would provide some amusement for those around him. As the guard blew his whistle for the train to depart the young fellow walked up to a carriage full of working men and said to one of them, " Is this Noah's Ark full ? "

" Almost," was the prompt reply, " all but the ass. Come in ! "

5. Try to put parts of the following description by Sir Samuel Baker of the Albert Nyanza either into blank verse or rhyming pentameters :—

The beach was perfectly clean sand, upon which the waves rolled like those of the sea, throwing up weeds precisely as seaweeds may be seen upon the English shore. It was a grand sight to look upon this vast reservoir of the mighty Nile, and to watch the heavy swell tumbling upon the beach, while far to the southwest the eye searched as vainly for a bound as though upon the Atlantic. It was with extreme emotion that I enjoyed this glorious scene. My wife, who had followed me so devotedly, stood by my side pale and exhausted—a wreck upon the shores of the great Albert lake that we had so long striven to reach. No European foot had ever trod upon its sand, nor had the eyes of a white man ever scanned its vast expanse of water. We were the first ; and this was the key to the great secret that even Julius Cæsar yearned to unravel, but in vain. Here was the great basin of the Nile that received *every drop of water*, even from the passing shower to the roaring mountain torrent that drained from Central Africa towards the north. This was the great reservoir of the Nile.

[N.B.—A fine sonnet might be written round this theme.]

6. Select a poem you like from your poetry book and try to add another stanza to it.

7. Write a similar stanza to each of the following :—

(a) Maria intended a letter to write,  
But could not begin (as she thought) to indite ;  
So went to her mother with pencil and slate  
Containing “ Dear Sister,” and also a date.

(b) Sometimes on lonely mountain meres  
I find a magic bark ;  
I leap on board : no helmsman steers :  
I float till all is dark.  
A gentle sound, an awful light !  
Three angels bear the Holy Grail :  
With folded feet, in stoles of white,  
On sleeping wings they sail.

(c) He rushed against the Austrian band  
In desperate career,  
And with his body, breast, and hand  
Bore down each hostile spear.

8. Put into verse some well-known historical story such as that of Alfred and the cakes.

9. A child of eight years wrote this :—

I have a little teddy bear,  
It sleeps with me at night,  
And in the morning when I wake  
It always hugs me tight.  
I have a little rabbit too,  
It also sleeps with me,  
And in the middle of the night  
They fight  
And wake me up, you see.

Write a little poem of a similar kind such as would please a child.

10. Write a few blank verse lines describing (a) to-day's weather, or (b) the view from some window.

11. Write a rhyming invitation to tea or to a party.

12. Write a rhyming apology for missing an appointment.

13. The following is the first stanza of a poem written by a girl of fourteen:—

It's October now in London and the year is growing mellow,

A soft blue mist is rising from the water over there,  
Down away in Kensington the leaves are growing yellow  
Where the West Wind swoops along the paths to stir  
the babies' hair.

Write one or more stanzas continuing the theme, and beginning with "It's October now in London."

14. Write a set of four-line stanzas beginning, "We had a pleasant walk to-day."

15. Put the following into pentameter lines:—

By the side of the stream she was coming to me, even among the primroses, as if she loved them all ; and every flower looked the brighter as her eyes shone on them. I could not see what her face was, my heart so awoke and trembled ; only that her hair was flowing from a wreath of white violets, and the grace of her coming was like the appearance of the first wind-flower. The pale gleam over the western cliffs threw a shadow of light behind her as if the sun were lingering. Never do I see that light from the closing of the west, even in these my aged days, without thinking of her. Ah me, if it comes to that, what do I see of earth or heaven without thinking of her ?

R. D. BLACKMORE : *Lorna Doone.*

### CHAPTER XIII.—EXPRESSION BY DRAWING

**§ 52. Words and Pictures.**—Even practised writers often find it difficult to express themselves in words to their own satisfaction ; and we all know how easy it is to cause misunderstandings by what we write. Tennyson says that—

Words, like Nature, half reveal  
And half conceal the soul within.

We have considered several methods of verbal expression, but there is another kind of “composition” which may either take the place of writing or supplement it—namely, the drawing of pictures. “But I cannot draw,” you say. Probably not—yet. But let us begin by considering a few pictures with a view to finding out what the draughtsmen had in their minds when they made them, and how far we could imitate them in the art of pictorial composition.

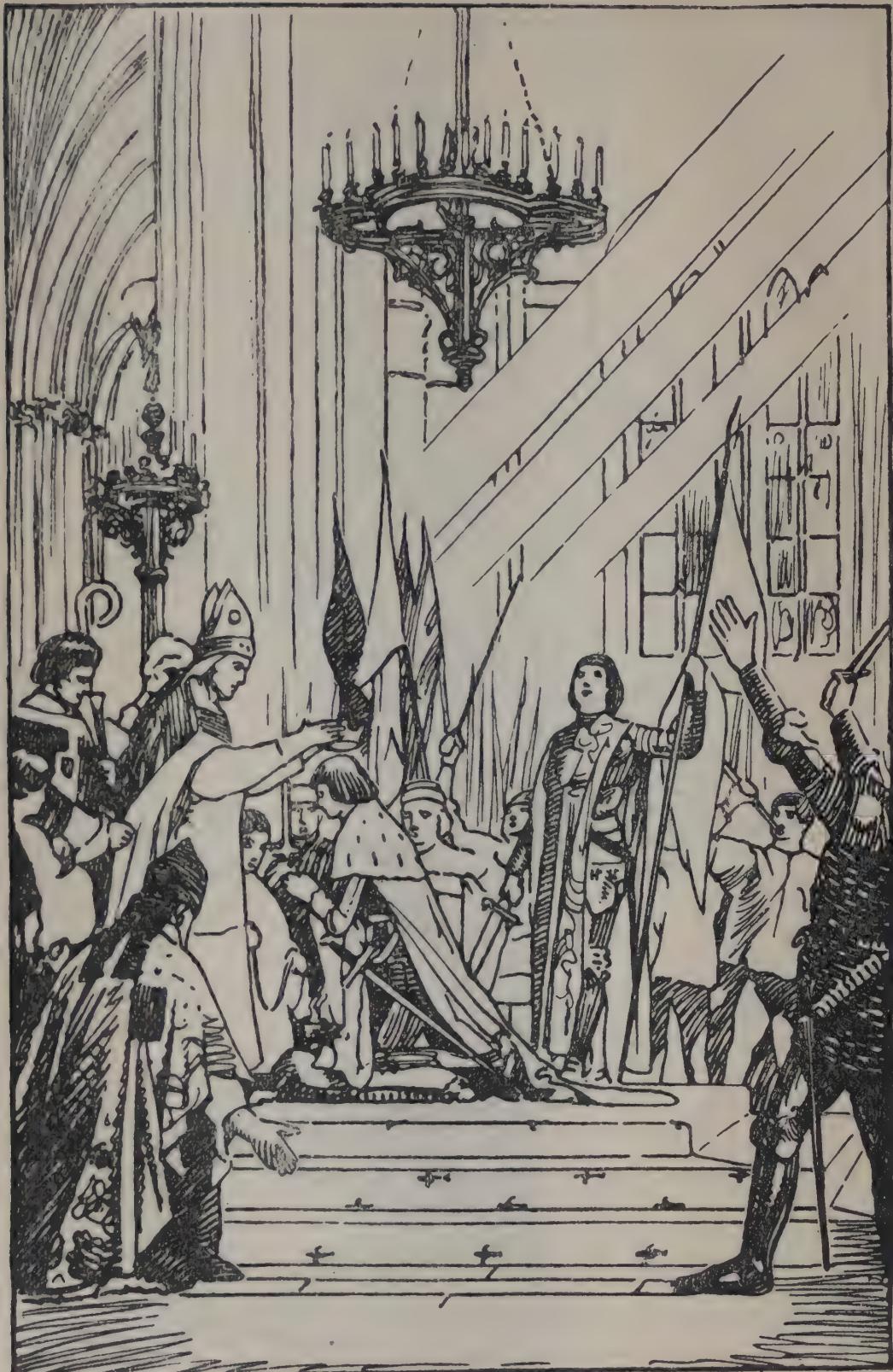
**§ 53. Expression and Illustration.**—Picture No. 1 on page 136 is an outline sketch from an oil painting. The painter wishes to tell a story. Consider how far he can go. He wishes to tell us that the knight in the background has overpowered and bound the figure upon the horse behind him, and that just when he is about to take possession of the maiden under the tree another knight appears, who challenges him to fight. Here the pictorial story stops. The artist cannot show what happened next, nor can he express action



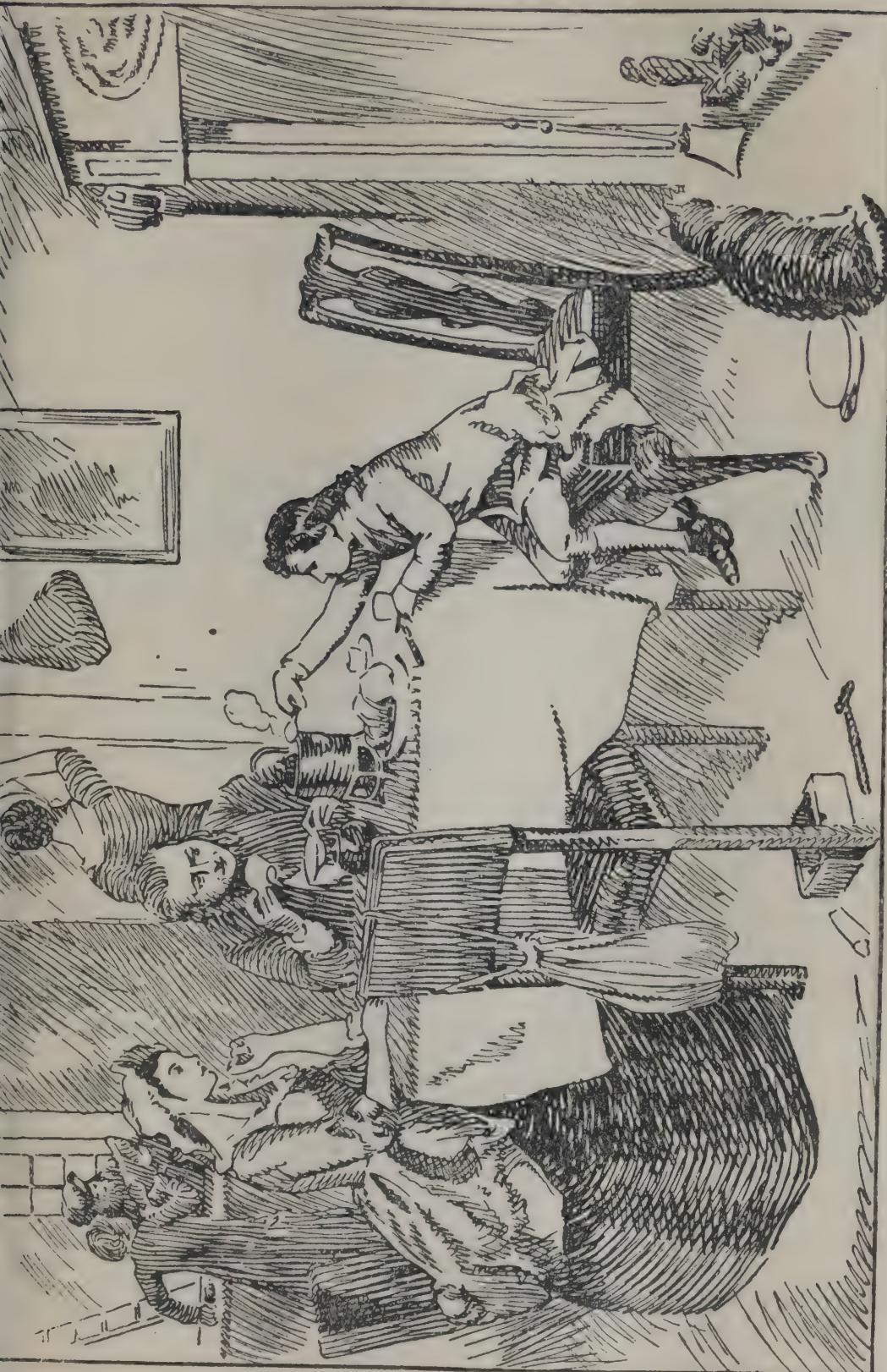
Picture No. I.



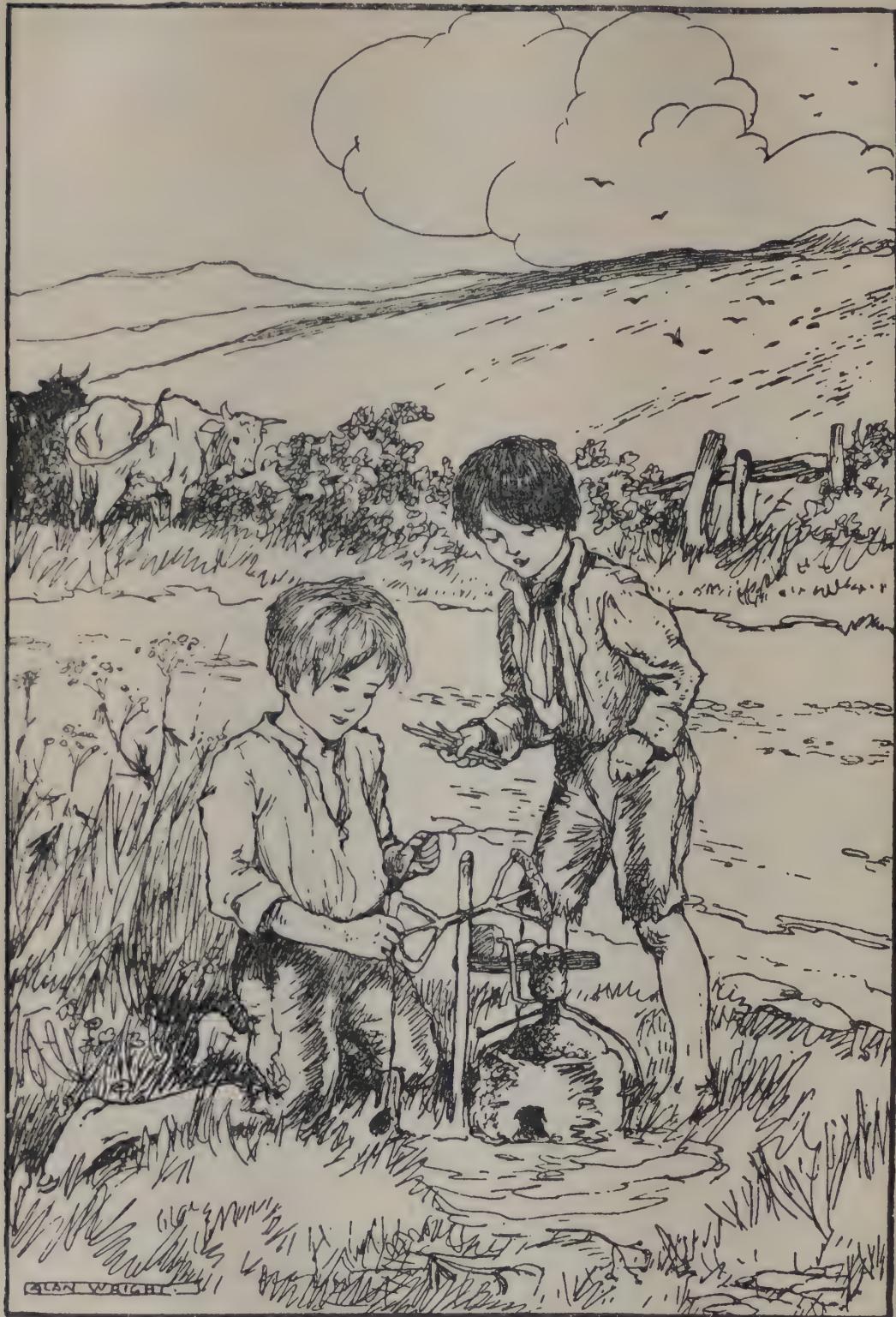
Picture No. 2.



Picture No. 3.



Picture No. 4.



Picture No. 5.

or dialogue, though he can suggest both. Moreover, the picture may be interpreted in more than one way—for example, the maiden under the tree might be associated with the knight in the foreground, who might be related to the figure bound upon the horse, and so on. The painter, however, can “describe” more vividly and satisfactorily than the writer, and he can convey more readily the atmosphere of the scene.

Telling a story by means of a single drawing, therefore, is not very satisfactory. A number of pictures in series might be better, as in the cinema, but the film needs the “captions,” as you know. This suggests that the written story might with advantage be accompanied by pictures which will help the reader to visualize the persons and scenes of the narrative, which would, in short, “illustrate” the tale in the manner of the next picture.

Picture No. 2 on page 137 is a rough sketch from a painting designed to illustrate part of Tennyson's poem, *The Lady of Shalott*. It attempts to show to the eye part of what the lady sees in her mirror—to help us to realize the scene more clearly, and to supply details of costume and personal appearance as well as of landscape, which the writer of the story-poem cannot give us without becoming tedious. Consider carefully how much the artist adds to the following words of the poet as well as how much he misses out:—

There she sees the highway near  
Winding down to Camelot :  
There the river eddy whirls,  
And there the surly village-churls  
And the red cloaks of market-girls  
Pass onward to Shalott.

Sometimes a troop of damsels glad,  
An abbot or an ambling pad,

Sometimes a curly shepherd-lad,  
 Or long-haired page in crimson clad,  
     Goes by to tower'd Camelot ;  
 And sometimes through the mirror blue  
 The knights come riding two and two :  
 She hath no loyal knight and true,  
     The Lady of Shalott.

## EXERCISE XXXV

1. Study Picture No. 3 (page 138). What do you think it represents? Does it tell a complete story without the help of words, or is it an illustration to accompany some story? If it is an illustration, what does it add to the written word? Why did the artist choose to illustrate this particular moment in the story? Which is the chief figure in the drawing, and which straight lines draw the eye to this figure? Would the staff of the banner have been as effective if it had been held in a perpendicular instead of a sloping position? Does this picture tell more or less of a story without the help of words than Picture No. 1? Why is it easier to guess its subject than to guess the subject of Picture No. 2?
2. Study Picture No. 4 (page 139). It is an outline drawing made from a painting entitled "James Watt and the Tea-Kettle." Recount the story as far as the picture tells it. What do you wish to know further? Can you fill out the story to your satisfaction if the following words are supplied: Glasgow, shop, parlour, aunt, disapproval, waste of time? What does the artist show that your complete story does not describe? In what way can the picture

be considered interpretative? (Consider posture and facial expression.)

3. Study Picture No. 5 (page 140). It is a drawing made to illustrate an incident in the early life of George Stephenson. How far does it tell a story? Where does the story stop? What does the artist wish to contrast? How would you colour the drawing? In what way would the addition of colour add to the picture's capacity for expression or description?
4. Which of the five pictures is most independent of words?

§ 54. **The Draughtsman.**—Drawing, then, can be used to supplement words, and words to supplement drawing. We are concerned with the former. Any one who wishes to use pencil, pen, or brush as his chief means of expression must be an artist, or at least competent draughtsman or sketcher; but within limits we can all use a pencil to help out our verbal expression.

A little study and practice is necessary, just as it is necessary to learn about sentences, clauses, phrases, grammar, and style before we can write in prose, and about feet, measure, rhyme, rhythm, and so on, before we can write in verse; but we need not wait to become artists or draughtsmen before beginning to illustrate our verbal composition, no more than we need to be poets "born, not made," before attempting to write in metre.

He had taught himself to make accurate drawings of things which interested him. His sketch books contained much that would be valuable now to historians of that old way of life.

This was Sard Harker, the hero of John Masefield's adventure novel; and his example is well worth following. "He had taught himself." It is not easy

to teach oneself to draw, but perseverance goes a long way. There are certain technical matters to be considered—proportion, perspective, anatomy, and modelling, to name only a few, and these cannot be learnt in a day. But the student of English would be well advised to acquire the ability to help out his verbal composition by the use of small sketches either in pencil or pen and ink.

Care must be taken to distinguish a would-be embellishment from an illustration. Turn to Essay 3 on page 159, and consider what pictorial additions would help the reader to make a more complete picture of Sir Roger. For myself, I would say that I should like to add at the sides of the essay a picture of a set of the clothes which would be worn by a gentleman of the period and the drawing of a Queen Anne wig; also a small sketch of a Queen Anne country house, and a suggestion of a town street of the period. I don't want any one to draw Sir Roger's face. That is a matter, somewhat sacred, between myself and Dick Steele, and an artist might make a Sir Roger who is not *mine*.

### EXERCISE XXXVI

1. Make a list of the drawings which you think you would like to have as illustrations for—
  - (a) *London Tradesmen*, by Goldsmith (page 164).
  - (b) *Country Congregations*, by Cowper (page 166).
  - (c) *The Praise of Chimney-Sweepers*, by Lamb (page 171).
  - (d) *The Waiter*, by Leigh Hunt (page 179).
  - (e) *A Plea for Gas Lamps*, by Stevenson (page 183).
  - (f) *On Speaking French*, by Lynd (page 187).
2. Would illustrations be appropriate for Bacon's Essays, or for *Household Superstitions* (page 160)? If not, why not?

§ 55. **The Small Sketch.**—It is not only the narrative or descriptive essay which the amateur artist can help us to understand. Small sketches might be used in the short or long story. A letter with sketches, be they “ever so humble,” would gain a double welcome. An article or informative paper would be much improved by the addition of diagrams, maps, and exact drawings. An answer to a geographical or historical question would be made more valuable by these additions. A good talker can often make his meaning much more clear by taking out a notebook and pencil and making a rapid sketch—for example, when he is asked to direct a person to some house or street. An entry in a diary might well be illustrated in a similar manner. And, as we have seen, the artist can often come to the help of a poet.

There is no need to wait until you have become a competent draughtsman before using pencil or pen for the above purposes. The ability to make sketches increases with practice, and it is easy to pick up hints on perspective, shading, and other technical matters by studying pictures made from drawings by first-class artists, such as those in *Punch*. This work adds a new interest to verbal or oral composition.

§ 56. **Pictorial Composition.**—Consider the following passage by Thomas de Quincey:—

Paint me, then, a room seventeen feet by twelve, and not more than seven and a half feet high. This, reader, is somewhat ambitiously styled, in my family, the drawing-room; but, being contrived “a double debt to pay,” it is also, and more justly, termed the library; for it happens that books are the only article of property in which I am richer than my neighbours. Of these I have about five thousand, collected gradually since my eighteenth year. Therefore, painter, put as many as you can into this room. Make it populous with books; and, furthermore, paint me a good fire; and furniture

(2,606)

plain and modest, befitting the unpretending cottage of a scholar. And near the fire paint me a tea-table ; and (as it is clear that no creature can come to see one on such a stormy night), place only two cups and saucers on the tea-tray ; and, if you know how to paint such a thing symbolically, or otherwise, paint me an eternal tea-pot ; for I usually drink tea from eight o'clock at night to four o'clock in the morning. And, as it is very unpleasant to make tea, paint me a lovely young woman sitting at the table.

The writer is describing a picture which could only be drawn by a very good artist ; but it may be " composed " by any one who follows the verbal description carefully. Try to rough it out so as to show the relative position of the various objects and people that are mentioned, not forgetting the writer. The "lovely young woman " may be represented by an oval for the head and a mass for the body, but imagination will supply the loveliness. This kind of " composition " is not only entertaining but useful in the highest degree.

### EXERCISE XXXVII

1. How would you compose a picture to illustrate the descriptive passage by Washington Irving printed on page 50 ?
2. Compose a picture which will help you to visualize—
  - (a) Sir Roger de Coverley's duel (page 160).
  - (b) The " Spectator " dropping the salt (page 161).
  - (c) The mercer showing the silk to the Chinaman (page 165).
  - (d) Charles Lamb giving the boy-sweep a " tester " (sixpence) (page 172).
  - (e) Leigh Hunt questioning the waiter (page 181).
  - (f) The lamplighter (page 185).
  - (g) The French barber and the kettle (page 189).

3. How would you choose to express yourself on one or more of the following subjects?—

- (1) Christmas. (2) War-ships in history. (3) Your last examination. (4) A recent success in school work or games. (5) Queen Elizabeth's views on sovereignty compared with those of Queen Victoria. (6) The events of yesterday. (7) The first signs of spring or winter. (8) Daylight saving. (9) Steam *versus* electric traction. (10) Your plans for a career. (11) Your opinion on a book you have recently read. (12) A conversation in which you took part with several others. (13) Shylock's apology for his bearing towards Antonio. (14) Chaucer's view of poetry compared with that of Wordsworth. (15) Joan of Arc.

## CHAPTER XIV.—A COLLECTION OF DON'TS

§ 57. **Thou shalt not.**—A wise remark of Portia's is applicable to instruction in English composition. "I can easier teach twenty what were good to be done than be one of the twenty to follow mine own teaching." It is only within limits that another person can tell us what or how to write, but an instructor of experience can tell us what to avoid. A certain amount of negative advice has already been given in this book, but there are other warnings which might be noted with advantage.

(a) *Don't split your infinitives.* The verb *to love* is a single expression as much as *am-are*, *lieb-en*, and *aim-er*. Do not insert anything between *to* and *love*; not "to ardently love" but "to love ardently."

*N.B.*—It is true that Thomas Hardy often splits the infinitive, and other instances can be found in standard literature. Some day it may be permissible, or even fashionable, to split the infinitive, but for the present, don't.

(b) *Don't use too many adjectives*, especially those which overlap in meaning. If a rose is described as *beautiful* it may also be necessary to describe it further as *sweet-smelling*, for some beautiful roses have little or no fragrance, but it is superfluous to add an adjective like *delightful* or *delicious*. The phrase, "a fine, bright, sunny day" might dispense with two of its epithets, and "A hard, dry piece of cheese" with one.

(c) *Don't keep the Verb waiting for its Adverb*, as does a distinguished author in a sentence already quoted—"China has been out of the limelight of the

newspapers *lately*." Here the verb *has been* ought not even to stand next the adverb, but embrace it.

(d) *Don't use flowery, stilted, or high-sounding language.* Not "the patient *experienced* a pain," but *felt* it. Not "the majority of individuals," but "most people." Not "it is contemplated to undertake," but "we think of doing."

(e) *Don't misuse words.*—

Not "I was not to go *without* my mother gave me leave," but *unless*.

Not "It *transpired* that," but *happened*.

Not "I had scarcely turned my back *than* he fell," but *when*.

Not "His *seldom* use of it," but *infrequent*.

Not "These are rather *unique*," but *rare* or *scarce*.

Not "The surgeon *requires* to be careful," but *must*.

Not "It was *practically* useless," but *almost*.

Not "He *partook* of a meal," but *had* or *made*.

Not "Owing to his father *being* absent," but "As his father *was* absent."

Not "Their *success* or *otherwise*," but *failure*.

Not "An *obnoxious* smell," but *noxious*.

Not "The heart's action was *natural*," but *normal*.

Not "He *laid* down," but *lay*.

Not "Bronchitis is liable to occur," but "The patient liable to an attack of bronchitis."

Not "The *actual* number," but *precise* or *exact*.

Not "Ill-will *between* the various races," but *among*.

(f) *Don't use Abstract Nouns* unless you are forced to do so. Not "The machine *has become an actuality*," but *has been made*.

(g) *Don't quote frequently*, and when you quote verify our quotation. Milton did not say "fresh *fields* and *pastures new*" but *woods*. Pope did not say "Hope brings eternal in the *youthful breast*" but *human*.

(h) *Don't use ambiguous Pronouns.* Study and correct the following \* :—

\* Quoted, with acknowledgments, from *Notes on the Composition of Scientific Papers*, by Sir T. Clifford Allbutt. (Macmillan.)

(1) *He* said to *his* patient that if *he* did not feel better *he* thought *he* had better return to say how *he* was.

(2) Even Shakespeare's imagination was not fired by Augustus, and *his* *Julius* was inclined to rant, and only inspired *him* to great verse after *he* was murdered.

(3) We use a saw to make a fiddle, and we throw *it* aside when we come to play upon *it*.

(4) My friend got a permit for his camera, and although he left *it* on board he photographed many scenes on the way.

(4) Where our kings have been crowned their ancestors lie interred, and *they* must walk over *their* grandsire's head to take his crown.

(i) *Don't use the Indefinite Pronoun "one" frequently.* Not "One uses this book for reference," but "This book must be (or is) used for reference." Not "One uses a lantern on moonless nights," but "A lantern must be used on moonless nights."

(j) *Don't use "you" and "yours" as Indefinite Pronouns.* Not "In preparing an essay you collect your information," etc., but "In preparing an essay, information must be collected," etc.

(k) *Don't leave a Participle hanging or "unrelated."* Not "Adverting to your advertisement . . . please send me, . . ." but "Having seen your advertisement . . . I shall be glad to receive . . .," or "Please send me . . . as advertised . . ." Not "My essay is nearly ready, having worked late last night," but "I worked late last night so that my essay is nearly ready." Not "Complaining of shortness of breath, the nurse made her lie down," but "She complained of shortness of breath, and (or so) the nurse made her lie down."

(l) *Don't use "and which" (or "and who") unless "which" (or "who") has been already used in the same sentence.* Not "These books, pleasant to read, and which are published very cheaply, have no permanent value," but "These books, which are pleasant to read, and which are published very cheaply, have no permanent value"; or omit the second "which."

(m) *Don't overwork "that" and "which."* Not "I am sure *that that* is what he meant," but "I am sure *that* was his meaning." Not "The question which you must answer . . .," but "The question you must answer . . ."

(n) *Don't finish a sentence with a Preposition*, for "A Preposition is a bad thing to end a sentence *with*." Not "The worst speech I have ever *listened to*," but "To which I have ever listened," or, better still, "I have ever heard." Not "That was the man we *heard of*," but "That was the man of whom we heard."

(o) *Don't jumble your phrases.* Not "We can offer you a dining-table, which will seat twelve persons with round legs, and one which will seat fourteen persons with square legs," but——(?)

(p) *Don't be afraid to use a good word a second time.* Use "church" twice over rather than call it a "sacred edifice," and avoid "gentlemen of the long robe" for lawyers, "his Satanic Majesty" for the devil, "the succulent bi-valve" for an oyster, etc.

(q) *Don't let your Scheme of Construction be too evident.* The skeleton is necessary for the proper support of the body, but in a healthy body it is well covered with flesh and skin.

### EXERCISE XXXVIII

Criticize the following paragraphs\* very carefully:—

(1) As the short story is, or till recently was, almost as much a French speciality as claret or sardines; and as M. France is one of the most specially French of Frenchmen, it might be supposed that his short stories would be extra-special. And so they are sometimes, but not always. The curse of purpose—the foot and mouth disease of the novel, spoiling its talk and hindering its progress—is perhaps more viru-

\* Copied verbatim from various books and periodicals.

lent in the short than in the long story ; and of late years, at any rate, M. France has been sadly purposeful.

(2) On almost every door of a Magyar house throughout Hungary one finds a small bronze plate screwed on near the door-bell, where it must catch every eye. On this plate, some two inches square, is engraved a tiny map of pre-war Hungary in its entirety. On this map are traced the red lines of the new frontier, cutting off north, south, east, and west her fairest and richest provinces ; underneath are the three Hungarian words, " Nem, Nem—Soha " (No, No—NEVER).

(3) The Turkoman has but scant idea of music, and there is no accounting for taste in that direction, even in Central Asia. An amusing example of this was afforded during a tour carried out by the writer, when a selection of operatic music on the gramophone was given to a native audience. The first piece chosen was a song by Melba, and at the conclusion thereof, the gathering, on being asked to express an opinion, declared that they thought it to be an old woman crying.

(4) During the repast given by the Crown Prince of Denmark to Lord Nelson, after the Battle of Copenhagen and the preliminaries of peace were adjusted, Nelson spoke in raptures of the bravery of the Danes, and particularly requested the Prince to introduce him to a very young officer, whom he described as having performed wonders during the battle by attacking his own ship immediately under her lower guns.

(5) The old Regent Street, because it was all of one architectural scheme, though allowing plenty of

variety within its framework, was the most dignified street in the Empire. It was a true expression of metropolitan reserve and strength. That has all gone now, and we have nothing to take its place.

(6) Those who repair to the sea-coast with a view of restoration from the languor of sickness, or for the tasteful purpose of contemplating the marine beauties of Nature, would probably desire a less tumultuous spot. Those who frequent, for purposes of pleasure, a spot so gay and expensive as Margate, must needs have a superfluity of money.

(7) An Englishman residing in Rome was advised to walk in the middle of the street after dark and to carry a revolver if he wished to avoid footpads. One night he forgot to do this, ran into an Italian at a street corner, and then found that his watch had gone.

(8) Advanced as he is in many ways, Mr. H. G. Wells is old-fashioned beside some novelists, because in the first place he writes everything. Not only so, but he generally uses large sheets of paper, such as we are accustomed to in the manuscripts of the Victorians. A sheet by him shows how second thoughts and fuller thoughts come to him, and how deftly they are woven in. His actual writing has a lift in it, a ballooning sort of touch, such as one finds in his novels. Moreover, when his script becomes typescript he still works on it, before it goes to the publisher.

(9) Burns served as a volunteer and was accorded a military funeral. Allan Cunningham records seeing him in "round hat surmounted by a bear-skin," recalling his "swarthy face, his ploughman stoop, his dark eyes, and his awkwardness in handling his arms." Walt Whitman—the Burns of America—served on the side of the Federals in the Civil War as

a member of the Army Service Corps. The one wrote what Carlyle deemed the greatest of all war odes, "Scots, Wha Hae," and the other "Beat! Beat! Drums!" and "Adieu, O Soldiers."

(10) With Collingwood Bruce's "Handbook" in his pocket, or, better still as far as the salient features are concerned, in his head, he who is making a first acquaintance with the Wall will find himself engaged in a most entrancing adventure. Soon will he be able to discover for himself the gates, turrets, milestones, exits, and entrances. Nor will he fail to realize that the Wall passes through a district that has become one of the most romantic in Great Britain.

(11) The younger generation must learn the lesson of life for themselves, and they will learn it better if they are not lectured to by their elders.

## SECOND SECTION—LITERARY EXAMPLES OF EXPRESSION

### SELECTED ESSAYS

#### 1. Of Travel

(FRANCIS BACON.)

TRAVEL, in the younger sort, is a part of education ; in the elder, a part of experience.

He that travelleth into a country before he hath some entrance into the language, goeth to school, and not to travel.

That young men travel under some tutor or grave servant, I allow well ; so that he be such a one that hath the language and hath been in the country before, whereby he may be able to tell them what things are worthy to be seen in the country where they go, what acquaintances they are to seek, what exercises or discipline the place yieldeth. For else young men shall go hooded, and look abroad little.

It is a strange thing that in sea-voyages, where there is nothing to be seen but sky and sea, men should make diaries ; but in land-travel, wherein so much is to be observed, for the most part they omit it, as if chance were fitter to be registered than observation. Let diaries therefore be brought in use.

The things to be seen and observed are the courts of princes, especially when they give audience to ambassadors ; the courts of justice, while they sit and hear causes ; and so of consistories ecclesiastic ; the

churches and monasteries, with the monuments which are therein extant ; the walls and fortifications of cities and towns, and so the havens and harbours ; antiquities and ruins ; libraries, colleges, disputations, and lectures, where any are ; shipping and navies ; houses and gardens of state and pleasure near great cities ; armories, arsenals, magazines, exchanges, burses, warehouses, exercises of horsemanship, fencing, training of soldiers and the like ; comedies, such whereunto the better sort of persons do resort ; treasuries of jewels and robes, cabinets and rarities ; and, to conclude, whatsoever is memorable in the places where they go : after all which the tutors or servants ought to make diligent inquiry. As for triumphs, masks, feasts, weddings, funerals, capital executions, and such shows, men need not so be put in mind of them ; yet they are not to be neglected.

If you will have a young man to put his travel into a little room, and in short time to gather much, this you must do : first, as was said, he must have some entrance into the language before he goeth. Then he must have such a servant or tutor as knoweth the country, as was likewise said. Let him carry with him also some card or book describing the country where he travelleth, which will be a good key to his inquiry. Let him keep also a diary.

Let him not stay long in one city or town ; more or less as the place deserveth, but not long. Nay, when he stayeth in one city or town, let him change his lodging from one end and part of the town to another, which is a great adamant of acquaintance. Let him sequester himself from the company of his country, and diet in such places where there is good company of the nation where he travelleth.

Let him, upon his removes from one place to another, procure recommendation to some person of quality residing in the place whither he removeth,

that he may use his favour in those things he desireth to see or know. Thus he may abridge his travel with much profit.

As for the acquaintance which is to be sought in travel, that which is most of all profitable is acquaintance with the secretaries and employed men of ambassadors ; for so in travelling in one country he shall lack the experience of many. Let him also see and visit eminent persons in all kinds which are of great name abroad, that he may be able to tell how the life greeth with the fame.

For quarrels, they are with care and discretion to be avoided. They are commonly for mistresses, healths, place, and words. And let a man beware how he keepeth company with choleric and quarrelsome persons, for they will engage him into their own quarrels.

When a traveller returneth home, let him not leave the countries where he hath travelled altogether behind him, but maintain a correspondence by letters with those of his acquaintance which are of most worth. And let his travel appear rather in his discourse than in his apparel or gesture ; and in his discourse let him be rather advised in his answers than forward to tell stories. And let it appear that he both not change his country manners for those of foreign parts, but only prick in some flowers of that he hath learned abroad, into the customs of his own country.

## 2. Of Studies

(FRANCIS BACON.)

Studies serve for delight, for ornament, and for ability. Their chief use for delight is in privateness and retiring ; for ornament is in discourse, and for ability is in the judgment and disposition of business. For expert men can execute, and perhaps judge of particulars, one by one, but the general counsels and

the plots and marshalling of affairs come best from those that are learned.

To spend too much time in studies is sloth, to use them too much for ornament is affectation, to make judgment only by their rules is the humour of a scholar. They perfect Nature, and are perfected by experience. For natural abilities are like natural plants, that need pruning by study ; and studies themselves do give forth directions too much at large, except they be bounded in by experience.

Crafty men contempn studies, simple men admire them, and wise men use them, for they teach not their own use, but that is a wisdom without them, and above them won by observation.

Read not to contradict and confute, nor to believe and take for granted, nor to find talk and discourse, but to weigh and consider.

Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested—that is, some books are to be read only in parts, others to be read, but not curiously, and some few to be read wholly, and with diligence and attention.

Some books also may be read by deputy, and extracts made of them by others, but that would be only in the less important arguments and the meaner sort of books ; else distilled books are like common distilled waters, flashy things.

Reading maketh a full man, conference a ready man, and writing an exact man. And therefore if a man write little he had need have a great memory ; if he confer little he had need have a present wit, and if he read little he had need have much cunning to seem to know that he doth not.

Histories make men wise, poets witty, the mathematics subtle, natural philosophy deep, moral grave, logic and rhetoric able to contend, “ Abeunt studia in mores.” Nay, there is no stond nor impediment in the wit but may be wrought out by fit studies, like as

diseases of the body may have appropriate exercises. Bowling is good for the back, shooting for the lungs and breast, gentle walking for the stomach, riding for the head, and the like.

So if a man's wit be wandering, let him study the mathematics, for in demonstrations, if his wit be called away never so little, he must begin again ; if his wit be not apt to distinguish or find differences, let him study the schoolmen, for they are *cymini sectores* ; if he be not apt to beat over matters, and to call up one thing to prove and illustrate another, let him study the lawyers' cases, so every defect of the mind may have a special receipt.

### 3. Sir Roger de Coverley

(RICHARD STEELE.)

The first of our society is a gentleman of Worcester-hire, of ancient descent, a Baronet, his name Sir Roger de Coverley. His great-grandfather was inventor of that famous country-dance which is called after him.

All who know that shire are well acquainted with the parts and merits of Sir Roger. He is a gentleman that is very singular in his behaviour, but his singularities proceed from his good sense, and are contradictions to the manners of the world only as he thinks the world is in the wrong.

However, this humour creates him no enemies, for he does nothing with sourness or obstinacy ; and his being unconfined to modes and forms, makes him but the readier and more capable to please and oblige all who know him. When he is in town he lives in Soho-square. It is said he keeps himself a bachelor, by reason he was crossed in love by a perverse beautiful widow of the next county to him.

Before this disappointment, Sir Roger was what

you call a fine gentleman, had often supped with my Lord Rochester and Sir George Etherege, fought a duel upon his first coming to town, and kicked Bully Dawson in a public coffee-house, for calling him youngster. But, being ill-used by the above-mentioned widow, he was very serious for a year and a half ; and though, his temper being naturally jovial, he at last got over it, he grew careless of himself and never dressed afterwards. He continues to wear a coat and doublet of the same cut that were in fashion at the time of his repulse, which, in his merry humours, he tells us, has been in and out twelve times since he first wore it.

He is now in his fifty-sixth year, cheerful, gay, and hearty ; keeps a good house both in town and country ; a great lover of mankind ; but there is such a mirthful cast in his behaviour, that he is rather beloved than esteemed. His tenants grow rich, his servants look satisfied, all the young women profess love to him, and the young men are glad of his company ; when he comes into a house, he calls the servants by their names, and talks all the way upstairs to a visit. I must not omit, that Sir Roger is a justice of the quorum ; that he fills the chair at a quarter-sessions with great abilities, and three months ago, gained universal applause, by explaining a passage in the Game Act.

#### 4. Household Superstitions

(JOSEPH ADDISON.)

Going yesterday to dine with an old acquaintance, I had the misfortune to find his whole family very much dejected. Upon asking him the occasion of it, he told me that his wife had dreamt a very strange dream the night before, which they were afraid portended some misfortune to themselves or to their children. At her coming into the room, I observed a settled melancholy

in her countenance, which I should have been troubled for, had I not heard from whence it proceeded.

We were no sooner sat down, but, after having looked upon me a little while, "My dear," says she, turning to her husband, "you may now see the stranger that was in the candle last night." Soon after this, as they began to talk of family affairs, a little boy at the lower end of the table told her that he was to go into join-hand on Thursday. "Thursday!" says she. "No, child; if it please God, you shall not begin upon Childermass day; tell your writing-master that Friday will be soon enough."

I was reflecting with myself on the oddness of her fancy, and wondering that anybody would establish it as a rule, to lose a day in every week. In the midst of these my musings, she desired me to reach her a little salt upon the point of my knife, which I did in such a trepidation and hurry of obedience that I let it drop by the way; at which she immediately startled, and said it fell towards her. Upon this I looked very blank; and observing the concern of the whole table, began to consider myself, with some confusion, as a person that had brought a disaster upon the family. The lady, however, recovering herself after a little space, said to her husband with a sigh, "My dear, misfortunes never come single."

My friend, I found, acted but an under part at his table; and, being a man of more good-nature than understanding, thinks himself obliged to fall in with all the passions and humours of his yoke-fellow. "Do not you remember, child," says she, "that the pigeon-house fell the very afternoon that our careless wench pilt the salt upon the table?"—"Yes," says he, "my dear; and the next post brought us an account of the battle of Almanza."

The reader may guess at the figure I made, after having done all this mischief. I dispatched my dinner as soon as I could, with my usual taciturnity; when,

to my utter confusion, the lady seeing me quitting my knife and fork, and laying them across one another upon my plate, desired me that I would humour her so far as to take them out of that figure and place them side by side. What the absurdity was which I had committed I did not know, but I suppose there was some traditional superstition in it ; and therefore, in obedience to the lady of the house, I disposed of my knife and fork in two parallel lines, which is the figure I shall always lay them in for the future, though I do not know any reason for it.

It is not difficult for a man to see that a person has conceived an aversion to him. For my own part, I quickly found, by the lady's looks, that she regarded me as a very odd kind of fellow, with an unfortunate aspect : for which reason I took my leave immediately after dinner, and withdrew to my own lodgings. Upon my return home, I fell into a profound contemplation on the evils that attend these superstitious follies of mankind ; how they subject us to imaginary afflictions, and additional sorrows, that do not properly come within our lot. As if the natural calamities of life were not sufficient for it, we turn the most indifferent circumstances into misfortunes, and suffer as much from trifling accidents as from real evils.

I have known the shooting of a star spoil a night's rest ; and have seen a man in love grow pale, and lose his appetite, upon the plucking of a merry-thought. A screech-owl at midnight has alarmed a family more than a band of robbers ; nay, the voice of a cricket hath struck more terror than the roaring of a lion. There is nothing so inconsiderable which may not appear dreadful to an imagination that is filled with omens and prognostics : a rusty nail or a crooked pin shoot up into prodigies.

Many an old maid produces infinite disturbances of this kind among her friends and neighbours. I know a maiden aunt of a great family, who is one of these

antiquated Sibyls, that forebodes and prophesies from one end of the year to the other. She is always seeing apparitions and hearing death-watches ; and was the other day almost frightened out of her wits by the great house-dog that howled in the stable, at a time when she lay ill of the toothache.

Such an extravagant cast of mind engages multitudes of people not only in impertinent terrors, but in supernumerary duties of life, and arises from that fear and ignorance which are natural to the soul of man. The horror with which we entertain the thoughts of death, or indeed of any future evil, and the uncertainty of its approach, fill a melancholy mind with innumerable apprehensions and suspicions, and consequently dispose it to the observation of such groundless prodigies and predictions. For as it is the chief concern of wise men to retrench the evils of life by the reasonings of philosophy, it is the employment of fools to multiply them by the sentiments of superstition.

For my own part, I should be very much troubled were I endowed with this divining quality, though it should inform me truly of everything than can befall me. I would not anticipate the relish of any happiness, nor feel the weight of any misery, before it actually arrives.

I know but one way of fortifying my soul against these gloomy presages and terrors of mind ; and that is, by securing to myself the friendship and protection of that Being who disposes of events and governs futurity. He sees, at one view, the whole thread of my existence, not only that part of it which I have already passed through, but that which runs forward into all the depths of eternity. When I lay me down to sleep, I recommend myself to His care ; when I awake, I give myself up to His direction. Amidst all the evils that threaten me, I will look up to Him for help, and question not but He will either avert them, or turn them to my advantage. Though I know

neither the time nor the manner of the death I am to die, I am not at all solicitous about it ; because I am sure that He knows them both, and that He will not fail to comfort and support me under them.

### 5. London Tradesmen

(OLIVER GOLDSMITH.)

The shops of London are as well furnished as those of Pekin. Those of London have a picture hung at their door, informing the passengers what they have to sell, as those at Pekin have a board to assure the buyer that they have no intent to cheat him.

I went this morning to buy silk for a nightcap. Immediately upon entering the mercer's shop, the master and his two men, with wigs plastered with powder, appeared to ask my commands. They were certainly the civillest people alive ; if I but looked they flew to the place where I cast my eye ; every motion of mine sent them running round the whole shop for my satisfaction. I informed them that I wanted what was good, and they showed me not less than forty pieces, and each was better than the former, the prettiest pattern in nature, and the fittest in the world for nightcaps.

“ My very good friend,” said I to the mercer, “ you must not pretend to instruct me in silks ; I know these in particular to be no better than your flimsy bungees.”

“ That may be,” cried the mercer, who, I afterwards found, had never contradicted a man in his life : “ I cannot pretend to say but they may ; but I can assure you, my Lady Trail has had a sack from this piece this very morning.”

“ But, friend,” said I, “ though my lady has chosen a sack from it, I see no necessity that I should wear it for a nightcap.”

“ That may be,” returned he again ; “ yet what becomes a pretty lady, will at any time look well on a handsome gentleman.”

This short compliment was thrown in so very seasonably upon my ugly face, that even though I disliked the silk, I desired him to cut me off the pattern of a nightcap.

While this business was consigned to his journeymen, the master himself took down some pieces of silk still finer than any I had yet seen, and spreading them before me, “There,” cries he, “there’s beauty; my Lord Snakeskin has bespoke the fellow to this for the birthnight this very morning; it would look charmingly in waistcoats.” “But I don’t want a waistcoat,” replied I. “Not want a waistcoat,” returned the mercer: “then I would advise you to buy one; when waistcoats are wanted, you may depend upon it they will come dear. Always buy before you want, and you are sure to be well used, as they say in Cheapside.” There was so much justice in his advice that I could not refuse taking it; besides, the silk, which was really a good one, increased the temptation; so I gave orders for that too.

As I was waiting to have my bargains measured and cut, which I know not how, they executed but slowly, during the interval the mercer entertained me with the modern manner of some of the nobility receiving company in their morning gowns. “Perhaps, sir,” added he, “you have a mind to see what kind of silk is universally worn.” Without waiting for my reply, he spreads a piece before me, which might be reckoned beautiful even in China. “If the nobility,” continues he, “were to know I sold this to any under a Right Honourable, I should certainly lose their custom; you see, my lord, it is at once rich, tasty, and quite the thing.”—“I am no lord,” interrupted I.—“I beg pardon,” cried he; “but be pleased to remember, when you intend buying a morning gown, that you had an offer from me of something worth money. Conscience, sir, conscience is my way of dealing; you may buy a morning gown now, or you may stay till

they become dearer and less fashionable ; but it is not my business to advise." In short, most reverend Fum, he persuaded me to buy a morning gown also, and would probably have persuaded me to buy half the goods in his shop, if I had stayed long enough or was furnished with sufficient money.

Upon returning home, I could not help reflecting, with some astonishment, how this very man, with such a confined education and capacity, was yet capable of turning me as he thought proper, and moulding me to his inclinations. I knew he was only answering his own purpose, even while he attempted to appear solicitous about mine: yet, by a voluntary infatuation, a sort of passion, compounded of vanity and good-nature, I walked into the snare with my eyes open, and put myself to future pain in order to give him immediate pleasure. The wisdom of the ignorant somewhat resembles the instinct of animals ; it is diffused in but a very narrow sphere, but within that circle it acts with vigour, uniformity, and success.

## 6. Country Congregations

(WILLIAM COWPER.)

DEAR COUSIN,—The country at present, no less than the metropolis, abounding with politicians of every kind, I begun to despair of picking up any intelligence that might possibly be entertaining to your readers. However, I have lately visited some of the most distant parts of the kingdom with a clergyman of my acquaintance : I shall not trouble you with an account of the improvements that have been made in the seats we saw according to the modern taste, but proceed to give you some reflections which occurred to us on observing several country churches, and the behaviour of the congregations.

The ruinous condition of some of these edifices gave

me great offence ; and I could not help wishing that the honest vicar, instead of indulging his genius for improvements, by inclosing his gooseberry bushes within a Chinese rail, and converting half an acre of his glebe-land into a bowling green, would have applied part of his income to the more laudable purpose of sheltering his parishioners from the weather, during their attendance on divine service. It is no uncommon thing to see the parsonage-house well thatched, and in exceeding good repair, whilst the church perhaps has scarce any other roof than the ivy that grows over it. The noise of owls, bats, and magpies makes the principal part of the church music in many of these ancient edifices ; and the walls, like a large map, seem to be portioned out into capes, seas, and promontories, by the various colours by which the damps have stained them. Sometimes, the foundation being too weak to support the steeple any longer, it has been expedient to pull down that part of the building, and to hang the bells under a wooden shed on the ground beside it. This is the case of a parish in Norfolk, through which I lately passed, and where the clerk and the sexton, like the two figures at St. Dunstan's, serve the bells in capacity of clappers, by striking them alternately with a hammer.

In other churches I have observed that nothing unseemly or ruinous is to be found, except in the clergyman, and the appendages of his person. The squire of the parish, or his ancestors, perhaps, to testify their devotion, and leave a lasting monument of their magnificence, have adorned the altar-piece with the richest crimson velvet, embroidered with vine leaves and ears of wheat ; and have dressed up the pulpit with the same splendour and expense ; while the gentleman, who fills it, is exalted in the midst of all this finery, with a surplice as dirty as a farmer's frock, and a periwig that seems to have transferred its faculty of curling to the band which appears in full buckle beneath it.

But if I was concerned to see several distressed pastors, as well as many of our country churches in a tottering condition, I was more offended with the indecency of worship in others. I could wish that the clergy would inform their congregations, that there is no occasion to scream themselves hoarse in making the responses ; that the town-crier is not the only person qualified to pray with due devotion ; and that he who brawls the loudest may, nevertheless, be the wickedest fellow in the parish. The old women too in the aisle might be told, that their time would be better employed attending to the sermon, than in fumbling over their tattered testaments till they have found the text ; by which time the discourse is near drawing to a conclusion : while a word or two of instruction might not be thrown away upon the younger part of the congregation, to teach them that making posies in summer-time, and cracking nuts in autumn, is no part of the religious ceremony.

The good old practice of psalm-singing is, indeed, wonderfully improved in many country churches since the days of Sternhold and Hopkins ; and there is scarce a parish clerk, who has so little taste as not to pick his staves out of the New Version. This has occasioned great complaints in some places, where the clerk has been forced to bawl to himself, because the rest of the congregation cannot find the psalm at the end of their prayer-books ; while others are highly disgusted at the innovation, and stick as obstinately to the Old Version as to the Old Style. The tunes themselves have also been new set to jiggish measures ; and the sober drawl, which used to accompany the two first staves of the hundredth psalm, with the *Gloria Patri*, is now split into as many quavers as an Italian air. For this purpose there is in every county an itinerant band of vocal musicians, who make it their business to go round to all the churches in their turns, and, after a prelude with the pitch pipe, astonish the

udience with hymns set to the new Winchester measure, and anthems of their own composing. As these new-fashioned psalmodists are necessarily made up of young men and maids, we may naturally suppose, that there is a perfect concord and sympathy between them.

It is a difficult matter to decide, which is looked upon as the greatest man in a country church, the parson or his clerk. The latter is most certainly held in higher veneration, where the former happens to be only a poor curate, who rides post every Sabbath from village to village, and mounts and dismounts at the church door. The clerk's office is not only to tag the prayers with an Amen, or usher in the sermon with a tave ; but he is also the universal father to give away the brides, and the standing god-father to all the newborn children. But in many places there is a still greater man belonging to the church, than either the parson or the clerk himself. The person I mean is the Squire ; who, like the King, may be styled Head of the Church in his own parish. If the benefice be in his own gift, the vicar is his creature, and of consequence entirely at his devotion : or, if the care of the church be left to a curate, the Sunday fees of roast beef and plum pudding, and a liberty to shoot in the manor, will bring him as much under the Squire's command as his dogs and horses. For this reason the bell is often kept tolling, and the people waiting in the church-yard an hour longer than the usual time ; nor must the service begin till the Squire has strutted up the aisle, and seated himself in the great pew in the chancel. The length of the sermon is also measured by the will of the Squire, as formerly by the hour-glass ; and I know one parish where the preacher has always the complaisance to conclude his discourse, however abruptly, the minute that the Squire gives the signal, by rising up after his nap.

In a village church, the Squire's lady or the vicar's

wife are perhaps the only females who are stared at for their finery ; but in the larger cities and towns, where the newest fashions are brought down weekly by the stage-coach or waggon, all the wives and daughters of the topping tradesmen vie with each other every Sunday in the elegance of their apparel. I could even trace their gradations in their dress, according to the opulence, the extent, and the distance of the place from London. I was at church in a populous city in the north, where the mace-bearer cleared the way for Mrs. Mayoress, who came sidling after him in an enormous fan-hoop, of a pattern which had never been seen before in those parts. At another church, in a corporation town, I saw several *Negligees*, with fur-belowed aprons, which had long disputed the prize of superiority : but these were most wofully eclipsed by a burgess's daughter, just come from London, who appeared in a Trollope or Slammerkin, with treble ruffles to the cuffs, pinked and gimped, and the sides of the petticoat drawn up in festoons. In some lesser borough towns, the contest, I found, lay between three or four black and green bibs and aprons ; at one, a grocer's wife attracted our eyes, by a new-fashioned cap, called a Joan ; and, at another, they were wholly taken up by a mercer's daughter in a Nun's Hood.

I need not say anything of the behaviour of the congregations in these more polite places of religious resort ; as the same genteel ceremonies are practised there, as at the most fashionable churches in town. The ladies, immediately on their entrance, breathe a pious ejaculation through their fan sticks, and the beaux very gravely address themselves to the Haberdashers' Bills, glued upon the linings of their hats. This pious duty is no sooner performed, than the exercise of bowing and curtsying succeeds ; the locking and unlocking of the pews drowns the reader's voice at the beginning of the service ; and the rustling of silks, added to the whispering and tittering of

so much good company, renders him totally unintelligible to the very end of it.—I am, dear Cousin, Yours, etc.

## 7. The Praise of Chimney-Sweepers

(CHARLES LAMB.)

I like to meet a sweep—understand me—not a grown sweeper—old chimney-sweepers are by no means attractive—but one of those tender novices, blooming through their first nigritude, the maternal washings not quite effaced from the cheek—such as come forth with the dawn, or somewhat earlier, with their little professional notes sounding like the *peep-peep* of a young sparrow; or liker to the matin lark should I pronounce them, in their aërial ascents not seldom anticipating the sunrise?

I have a kindly yearning towards these dim specks—poor blots—innocent blacknesses—

I reverence these young Africans of our own growth—these almost clergy imps, who sport their cloth without assumption; and from their little pulpits (the tops of chimneys), in the nipping air of a December morning, preach a lesson of patience to mankind.

When a child, what a mysterious pleasure it was to witness their operation! to see a chit no bigger than one's self, enter, one knew not by what process, into what seemed the *fauces Averni*—to pursue him in imagination, as he went sounding on through so many dark stifling caverns, horrid shades! to shudder with the idea that “now, surely he must be lost for ever!”—to revive at hearing his feeble shout of discovered daylight—and then (O fulness of delight!) running out of doors, to come just in time to see the sable phenomenon emerge in safety, the brandished weapon of his art victorious like some flag waved over a conquered citadel! I seem to remember having been told, that

a bad sweep was once left in a stack with his brush, to indicate which way the wind blew. It was an awful spectacle, certainly ; not much unlike the old stage direction in *Macbeth*, where the “Apparition of a child crowned, with a tree in his hand, rises.”

Reader, if thou meetest one of these small gentry in thy early rambles, it is good to give him a penny,—it is better to give him twopence. If it be starving weather, and to the proper troubles of his hard occupation, a pair of kibed heels (no unusual accompaniment) be superadded, the demand on thy humanity will surely rise to a tester.

There is a composition, the ground-work of which I have understood to be the sweet wood yclept sassafras. This wood boiled down to a kind of tea, and tempered with an infusion of milk and sugar, hath to some tastes a delicacy beyond the China luxury. I know not how thy palate may relish it ; for myself, with every deference to the judicious Mr. Read, who hath time out of mind kept open a shop (the only one he avers in London) for the vending of this “wholesome and pleasant beverage,” on the south side of Fleet Street, as thou approachest Bridge Street—*the only Salopian house*—I have never yet adventured to dip my own particular lip in a basin of his commended ingredients—a cautious premonition to the olfactories constantly whispering to me, that my stomach must infallibly, with all due courtesy, decline it. Yet I have seen palates, otherwise not uninstructed in dietetical elegancies, sup it up with avidity.

I know not by what particular conformation of the organ it happens, but I have always found that this composition is surprisingly gratifying to the palate of a young chimney-sweeper—whether the oily particles (sassafras is slightly oleaginous) do attenuate and soften the fuliginous concretions, which are sometimes found (in dissections) to adhere to the roof of the mouth in these unfledged practitioners ; or whether

Nature, sensible that she had mingled too much of bitter wood in the lot of these raw victims, caused to grow out of the earth her sassafras for a sweet lenitive—but so it is, that no possible taste or odour to the senses of a young chimney-sweeper can convey a delicate excitement comparable to this mixture. Being penniless, they will yet hang their black heads over the ascending steam, to gratify one sense if possible, seemingly no less pleased than those domestic animals—cats—when they purr over a new-found sprig of valerian. There is something more in these sympathies than philosophy can inculcate.

Now albeit Mr. Read boasted, not without reason, that his is the *only Salopian house*; yet be it known to thee, reader—if thou art one who keepest what are called good hours, thou art haply ignorant of the fact—he hath a race of industrious imitators, who from stalls, and under open sky, dispense the same savoury mess to humbler customers, at that dead time of the dawn, when (as extremes meet) the rake, reeling home from his midnight cups, and the hard-handed artisan leaving his bed to resume the premature labours of the day, jostle, not unfrequently to the manifest disconcerting of the former, for the honours of the pavement. It is the time when, in summer, between the expired and the not yet relumined kitchen-fires, the kennels of our fair metropolis give forth their least satisfactory odours. The rake, who wisheth to dissipate his o'ernight vapours in more grateful coffee, curses the ungenial fume, as he passeth; but the artisan stops to taste, and blesses the fragrant breakfast.

This is *saloop*—the precocious herb-woman's darling—the delight of the early gardener, who transports his smoking cabbages by break of day from Hammer-smith to Covent Garden's famed piazzas—the delight, and oh! I fear, too often the envy, of the unpennied sweep. Him shouldst thou haply encounter, with his dim visage pendent over the grateful steam, regale him

with a sumptuous basin (it will cost thee but three-halfpennies) and a slice of delicate bread and butter (an added halfpenny)—so may thy culinary fires, eased of the o'ercharged secretions from thy worse-placed hospitalities, curl up a lighter volume to the welkin—so may the descending soot never taint thy costly well-ingredienteed soups—nor the odious cry, quick-reaching from street to street, of the *fired chimney*, invite the rattling engines from ten adjacent parishes, to disturb for a casual scintillation thy peace and pocket !

I am by nature extremely susceptible of street affronts ; the jeers and taunts of the populace ; the low-bred triumph they display over the casual trip, or splashed stocking, of a gentleman. Yet can I endure the jocularity of a young sweep with something more than forgiveness.—In the last winter but one, pacing along Cheapside with my accustomed precipitation when I walk westward, a treacherous slide brought me upon my back in an instant. I scrambled up with pain and shame enough—yet outwardly trying to face it down, as if nothing had happened—when the roguish grin of one of these young wits encountered me. There he stood, pointing me out with his dusky finger to the mob, and to a poor woman (I suppose his mother) in particular, till the tears for the exquisiteness of the fun (so he thought it) worked themselves out at the corners of his poor red eyes, red from many a previous weeping, and soot-inflamed, yet twinkling through all with such a joy, snatched out of desolation, that Hogarth—but Hogarth has got him already (how could he miss him ?) in the March to Finchley, grinning at the pieman—there he stood, as he stands in the picture, irremovable, as if the jest was to last for ever—with such a maximum of glee, and minimum of mischief, in his mirth—for the grin of a genuine sweep hath absolutely no malice in it—that I could have been content, if the honour of a

gentleman might endure it, to have remained his butt  
nd his mockery till midnight.

I am by theory obdurate to the seductiveness of  
what are called a fine set of teeth. Every pair of rosy  
ps (the ladies must pardon me) is a casket pre-  
sumably holding such jewels ; but, methinks, they  
hould take leave to “air” them as frugally as pos-  
ible. The fine lady, or fine gentleman, who show me  
heir teeth, show me bones. Yet must I confess, that  
rom the mouth of a true sweep a display (even to  
stentation) of those white and shiny ossifications,  
trikes me as an agreeable anomaly in manners, and  
n allowable piece of foppery. It is, as when

“ A sable cloud  
Turns forth her silver lining on the night.”

t is like some remnant of gentry not quite extinct ; a  
adge of better days ; a hint of nobility : and, doubt-  
ess, under the obscuring darkness and double night  
of their forlorn disguise, oftentimes lurketh good  
blood, and gentle conditions, derived from lost an-  
cestry, and a lapsed pedigree. The premature ap-  
prenticements of these tender victims give but too  
much encouragement, I fear, to clandestine and almost  
nfantile abductions ; the seeds of civility and true  
courtesy, so often discernible in these young grafts  
(not otherwise to be accounted for) plainly hint at  
some forced adoptions ; many noble Rachels mourn-  
ng for their children, even in our days, countenance  
the fact ; the tales of fairy spiriting may shadow a  
amentable verity, and the recovery of the young  
Montagu be but a solitary instance of good fortune  
out of many irreparable and hopeless *defiliations*.

In one of the state-beds at Arundel Castle, a few  
years since—under a ducal canopy—(that seat of the  
Howards is an object of curiosity to visitors, chiefly  
for its beds, in which the late duke was especially a

*connoisseur*)—encircled with curtains of delicatest crimson, with starry coronets inwoven—folded between a pair of sheets whiter and softer than the lap where Venus lulled Ascanius—was discovered by chance, after all methods of search had failed, at noonday, fast asleep, a lost chimney-sweeper. The little creature, having somehow confounded his passage among the intricacies of those lordly chimneys, by some unknown aperture had alighted upon this magnificent chamber; and, tired with his tedious explorations, was unable to resist the delicious invitement to repose, which he there saw exhibited; so creeping between the sheets very quietly, laid his black head upon the pillow, and slept like a young Howard.

Such is the account given to the visitors at the Castle.—But I cannot help seeming to perceive a confirmation of what I had just hinted at in this story. A high instinct was at work in the case, or I am mistaken. Is it probable that a poor child of that description, with whatever weariness he might be visited, would have ventured, under such a penalty as he would be taught to expect, to uncover the sheets of a Duke's bed, and deliberately to lay himself down between them, when the rug, or the carpet, presented an obvious couch, still far above his pretensions—is this probable, I would ask, if the great power of nature, which I contend for, had not been manifested within him, prompting to the adventure? Doubtless this young nobleman (for such my mind misgives me that he must be) was allured by some memory, not amounting to full consciousness, of his condition in infancy, when he was used to be lapped by his mother, or his nurse, in just such sheets as he there found, into which he was now but creeping back as into his proper *incunabula*, and resting-place.—By no other theory than by this sentiment of a pre-existent state (as I may call it), can I explain a deed so venturous, and, indeed,

pon any other system, so indecorous, in this tender, but unseasonable, sleeper.

My pleasant friend Jem White was so impressed with a belief of metamorphoses like this frequently taking place, that in some sort to reverse the wrongs of fortune in these poor changelings, he instituted an annual feast of chimney-sweepers, at which it was his pleasure to officiate as host and waiter. It was a solemn supper held in Smithfield, upon the yearly return of the fair of St. Bartholomew. Cards were sued a week before to the master-sweeps in and about the metropolis, confining the invitation to their younger fry. Now and then an elderly stripling would let in among us, and be good-naturedly winked at ; but our main body were infantry. One unfortunate eight, indeed, who, relying upon his dusky suit, had intruded himself into our party, but by tokens was providentially discovered in time to be no chimney-sweeper (all is not soot which looks so), was quitted out of the presence with universal indignation, as not having on the wedding garment ; but in general the greatest harmony prevailed.

The place chosen was a convenient spot among the pens, at the north side of the fair, not so far distant as to be impervious to the agreeable hubbub of that vanity, but remote enough not to be obvious to the interruption of every gaping spectator in it. The guests assembled about seven. In those little temporary parlours three tables were spread with napery, not so fine as substantial, and at every board a comely hostess presided with her pan of hissing sausages. The nostrils of the young rogues dilated at the savour. James White, as head waiter, had charge of the first table ; and myself, with our trusty companion Bigod, ordinarily ministered to the other two. There was clambering and jostling, you may be sure, who should get at the first table, for Rochester in his maddest days could not have done the humours of the scene.

with more spirit than my friend. After some general expression of thanks for the honour the company had done him, his inaugural ceremony was to clasp the greasy waist of old dame Ursula (the fattest of the three), that stood frying and fretting, half-blessing, half-cursing “ the gentlemen,” and imprint upon her chaste lips a tender salute, whereat the universal host would set up a shout that tore the concave, while hundreds of grinning teeth startled the night with their brightness. O it was a pleasure to see the sable younkers lick in the unctuous meat, with *his* more unctuous sayings—how he would fit the tit-bits to the puny mouths, reserving the lengthier links for the seniors—how he would intercept a morsel even in the jaws of some young desperado, declaring it “ must to the pan again to be browned, for it was not fit for a gentleman’s eating”—how he would recommend this slice of white bread, or that piece of kissing-crust, to a tender juvenile, advising them all to have a care of cracking their teeth, which were their best patrimony,—how genteelly he would deal about the small ale, as if it were wine, naming the brewer, and protesting, if it were not good, he should lose their custom; with a special recommendation to wipe the lip before drinking.

Then we had our toasts—“ the King,”—“ the Cloth,”—which, whether they understood or not, was equally diverting and flattering; and for a crowning sentiment, which never failed, “ May the Brush supersede the Laurel ! ” All these, and fifty other fancies, which were rather felt than comprehended by his guests, would he utter, standing upon tables, and prefacing every sentiment with a “ Gentlemen, give me leave to propose so and so,” which was a prodigious comfort to those young orphans; every now and then stuffing into his mouth (for it did not do to be squeamish on these occasions) indiscriminate pieces of those reeking sausages, which pleased them mightily, and

was the savouriest part, you may believe, of the entertainment.

“ Golden lads and lasses must,  
As chimney-sweepers, come to dust.”

James White is extinct, and with him these suppers have long ceased. He carried away with him half the fun of the world when he died—of my world at least. His old clients look for him among the pens ; and, missing him, reproach the altered feast of St. Bartholomew, and the glory of Smithfield departed for ever.

### 8. The Waiter

(LEIGH HUNT.)

Going into the City the other day upon business, we took a chop at a tavern, and renewed our acquaintance, after years of interruption, with that swift and untiring personage, yclept a waiter. We mention this long interval of acquaintance in order to account for any deficiencies that may be found in our description of him. Our readers, perhaps, will favour us with a better. He is a character before the public : thousands are acquainted with him, and can fill up the outline. But we felt irresistibly impelled to sketch him ; like a portrait-painter who comes suddenly upon an old friend, or upon an old servant of the family.

We speak of the waiter properly and generally so called—the representative of the whole, real, official race—and not of the humorist or other eccentric genius occasionally to be found in it—moving out of the orbit of tranquil but fiery waiting—not absorbed—not devout towards us—not silent or monosyllabical ;—fellows that affect a character beyond that of waiter, and get spoiled in club-rooms and places of theatrical resort.

Your thorough waiter has no ideas out of the sphere

of his duty and the business ; and yet he is not narrow-minded either. He sees too much variety of character for that. But his world is the tavern, and all mankind but its visitors. His female sex are the maid-servants and his young mistress, or the widow. If he is ambitious, he aspires to marry one of the two latter : if otherwise, and Molly is prudent, he does not know but he may carry her off some day to be mistress of the Golden Lion at Chinksford, where he will “ show off ” in the eyes of Betty Laxon who refused him.

He has no feeling of noise itself but as the sound of dining, or of silence but as a thing before dinner. Even a loaf with him is hardly a loaf ; it is so many “ breads.” His longest speech is the making out of a bill *viva voce*—“ Two beefs—one potatoes—three ales—two wines—six-and-twopence ”—which he does with an indifferent celerity, amusing to new-comers who have been relishing their fare, and not considering it as a mere set of items.

He attributes all virtues to everybody, provided they are civil and liberal ; and of the existence of some vices he has no notion. Gluttony, for instance, with him, is not only inconceivable, but looks very like a virtue. He sees in it only so many more “ beefs,” and a generous scorn of the bill. As to wine, or almost any other liquor, it is out of your power to astonish him with the quantity you call for. His “ Yes, sir,” is as swift, indifferent, and official at the fifth bottle as at the first.

Reform and other public events he looks upon purely as things in the newspaper, and the newspaper is a thing taken in at taverns, for gentlemen to read. His own reading is confined to “ Accidents and Offences,” and the advertisements for Butlers, which latter he peruses with an admiring fear, not choosing to give up “ a certainty.”

When young he was always in a hurry, and exas-

perated his mistress by running against the other waiters, and breaking the “neguses.” As he gets older, he learns to unite swiftness with caution ; declines wasting his breath in immediate answers to calls ; and knows, with a slight turn of his face and elevation of his voice, into what precise corner of the room to pitch his “Coming, sir.”

If you told him that, in Shakespeare’s time, waiters said, “Anon, anon, sir,” he would be astonished at the repetition of the same word in one answer, and at the use of three words instead of two ; and he would justly infer that London could not have been so large, nor the chop-houses so busy, in those days. He would drop one of the two syllables of his “Yes, sir,” if he could ; but business and civility will not allow it ; and therefore he does what he can by running them together in the swift sufficiency of his “Yezzir.”

“Thomas !”

“Yezzir.”

“Is my steak coming ?”

“Yezzir.”

“And the pint of port ?”

“Yezzir.”

“You’ll not forget the postman ?

“Yezzir.”

For in the habit of his acquiescence Thomas not seldom says “Yes, sir,” for “No, sir,” the habit itself rendering him intelligible.

His morning dress is a waistcoat or jacket ; his coat is for afternoons. If the establishment is flourishing, he likes to get into black as he grows elderly ; by which time also he is generally a little corpulent, and wears hair-powder, dressing somewhat laxly about the waist, for convenience of movement. Not, however, that he draws much upon that part of his body, except as a poise to what he carries ; for you may observe that a waiter, in walking, uses only his lower limbs, from his knees downwards. The movement of all the

rest of him is negative, and modified solely by what he bears in his hands.

At this period he has a little money in the funds and his nieces look up to him. He still carries, however, a napkin under his arm, as well as a cork-screw in his pocket ; nor, for all his long habit, can he help feeling a satisfaction at the noise he makes in drawing a cork. He thinks that no man can do it better ; and that Mr. Smith, who understands wine, is thinking so too, though he does not take his eyes off the plate.

In his right waistcoat pocket is a snuff-box, with which he supplies gentlemen late at night, after the shops are shut up, and when they are in desperate want of another fillip to their sensations. If particularly required, he will laugh at a joke, especially at that time of night, justly thinking that gentlemen towards one in the morning "*will* be facetious." He is of opinion it is in "*human nature*" to be a little fresh at that period, and to want to be put into a coach.

He announces his acquisition of property by bunch of seals to his watch, and perhaps rings on his fingers ; one of them a mourning ring left him by his late master, the other a present either from his nieces' father, or from some ultra-good-natured old gentleman whom he helped into a coach one night, and who had no silver about him.

To see him dine, somehow, hardly seems natural. And he appears to do it as if he had no right. You catch him at his dinner in a corner—huddled apart—“Thomas dining !” instead of helping dinner. One fancies that the stewed and hot meats and the constant smoke ought to be too much for him, and that he should have neither appetite nor time for such a meal.

Once a year (for he has few holidays) a couple of pedestrians meet him on a Sunday in the fields, and cannot conceive for the life of them who it is ; till the startling recollection occurs, “Good gracious ! it's the waiter at the Grogram !”

## 9. A Plea for Gas Lamps

(R. L. STEVENSON.)

Cities given, the problem was to light them. How to conduct individual citizens about the burgess-warren, when once heaven had withdrawn its leading luminary ? or—since we live in a scientific age—when once our spinning planet has turned its back upon the sun ? The moon, from time to time, was doubtless very helpful ; the stars had a cheery look among the chimney-pots ; and a cresset here and there, on church or citadel, produced a fine pictorial effect, and, in places, where the ground lay unevenly, held out the right hand of conduct to the benighted. But sun, moon, and stars abstracted or concealed, the night-faring inhabitant had to fall back—we speak on the authority of old prints—upon stable lanthorns two stories in height. Many holes, drilled in the conical turret-roof of this vagabond Pharos, let up spouts of dazzlement into the bearer's eyes ; and as he paced forth in the ghostly darkness, carrying his own sun by a ring about his finger, day and night swung to and fro and up and down about his footsteps. Blackness haunted his path ; he was beleaguered by goblins as he went ; and, curfew being struck, he found no light but that he travelled in throughout the township.

Closely following on this epoch of migratory lanthorns in a world of extinction, came the era of oil-lights, hard to kindle, easy to extinguish, pale and wavering in the hour of their endurance. Rudely puffed the winds of heaven ; roguishly climb up the all-destructive urchin ; and, lo ! in a moment night re-established her void empire, and the cit groped along the wall, supped but bedless, occult from guidance, and sorrily wading in the kennels. As if gamesome winds and gamesome youths were not

sufficient, it was the habit to sling these feeble lumenaries from house to house above the fairway. There, on invisible cordage, let them swing ! And suppose some crane-necked general to go speeding by on a tall charger, spurring the destiny of nations, red-hot in expedition, there would indubitably be some effusion of military blood, and oaths, and a certain crash of glass; and while the chieftain rode forward with a purple coxcomb, the street would be left to original darkness, unpiloted, unvoyageable, a province of the desert night.

The conservative, looking before and after, draws from each contemplation the matter for content. Out of the age of gas lamps he glances back slightly at the mirk and glimmer in which his ancestors wandered ; his heart waxes jocund at the contrast ; nor do his lips refrain from a stave, in the highest style of poetry, lauding progress and the golden mean. When gas first spread along a city, mapping it forth about evenfall for the eye of observant birds, a new age had begun for sociality and corporate pleasure-seeking, and begun with proper circumstance, becoming its own birthright. The work of Prometheus had advanced by another stride. Mankind and its supper-parties were no longer at the mercy of a few miles of sea-fog ; sundown no longer emptied the promenade ; and the day was lengthened out to every man's fancy. The city-folk had stars of their own ; biddable, domesticated stars.

It is true that these were not so steady, nor yet so clear, as their originals ; nor indeed was their lustre so elegant as that of the best wax candles. But then the gas stars, being nearer at hand, were more practically efficacious than Jupiter himself. It is true, again, that they did not unfold their rays with the appropriate spontaneity of the planets, coming out along the firmament one after another, as the need arises. But the lamplighters took to their heels every evening, and ran with a good heart. It was pretty to see man

thus emulating the punctuality of heaven's orbs ; and though perfection was not absolutely reached, and now and then an individual may have been knocked on the head by the ladder of the flying functionary, yet people commended his zeal in a proverb, and taught their children to say, "God bless 'the lamp-lighter !'" And since his passage was a piece of the day's programme, the children were well pleased to repeat the benediction, not, of course, in so many words, which would have been improper, but in some chaste circumlocution, suitable for infant lips.

God bless him, indeed ! For the term of his twilight diligence is near at hand ; and for not much longer shall we watch him speeding up the street and, at measured intervals, knocking another luminous hole into the dusk. The Greeks would have made a noble myth of such an one ; how he distributed starlight, and, as soon as the need was over, re-collected it ; and the little bull's-eye, which was his instrument, and held enough fire to kindle a whole parish, would have been fitly commemorated in the legend. Now, like all heroic tasks, his labours draw towards apotheosis, and in the light of victory himself shall disappear. For another advance has been effected. Our tame stars are to come out in future, not one by one, but all in a body and at once. A sedate electrician somewhere in a back office touches a spring—and behold ! from one end to another of the city, from east to west, from the Alexandra to the Crystal Palace, there is light ! *Fiat Lux*, says the sedate electrician. What a spectacle, on some clear, dark nightfall, from the edge of Hampstead Hill, when in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, the design of the monstrous city flashes into vision—a glittering hieroglyph many square miles in extent ; and when, to borrow and debase an image, all the evening street lamps burst together into song ! Such is the spectacle of the future, preluded the other day by the experiment in Pall Mall. Star-rise by

electricity, the most romantic flight of civilization ; the compensatory benefit for an innumerable array of factories and bankers' clerks. To the artistic spirit exercised about Thirlmere, here is a crumb of consolation ; consolatory, at least, to such of them as look out upon the world through seeing eyes, and contentedly accept beauty where it comes.

But the conservative, while lauding progress, is ever timid of innovation ; his is the hand upheld to counsel pause ; his is the signal advising slow advance. The word *electricity* now sounds the note of danger. In Paris, at the mouth of the Passage des Princes, in the place before the Opera portico, and in the Rue Drouot at the *Figaro* office, a new sort of urban star now shines out nightly, horrible, unearthly, obnoxious to the human eye ; a lamp for a nightmare ! Such a light as this should shine only on murders and public crime, or along the corridors of lunatic asylums, a horror to heighten horror. To look at it only once is to fall in love with gas, which gives a warm domestic radiance fit to eat by. Mankind, you would have thought, might have remained content with what Prometheus stole for them, and not gone fishing the profound heaven with kites to catch and domesticate the wildfire of the storm. Yet here we have the levin brand at our doors, and it is proposed that we should henceforward take our walks abroad in the glare of permanent lightning. A man need not be very superstitious if he scruple to follow his pleasures by the light of the Terror that Flieth, nor very epicurean if he prefer to see the face of beauty more becomingly displayed. That ugly blinding glare may not improperly advertise the home of slanderous *Figaro*, which is a back-shop to the infernal regions ; but where soft joys prevail, where people are convoked to pleasure and the philosopher looks on smiling and silent, where love and laughter and deifying wine abound, there, at least, let the old mild lustre shine upon the ways of man.

## 10. On Speaking French \*

(ROBERT LYND.)

I doubt if I shall ever be able to speak French. The longer I stay in the country the more difficult I find it to make myself understood. The other day I was bitten by a mosquito—in fact, by several mosquitoes. I went into a chemist's for a cure and startled him by telling him that I had been stabbed by a musketeer. The only kind of conversation I can carry on in French for any considerable time is the kind I have with the old woman of eighty who looks after the chalet. She says: "Good day, sir." I reply: "Good day, madam." She says: "It is beautiful weather." I reply: "Yes, very beautiful." She says: "It is sweet." I reply: "Yes, yes, very sweet." She waves her arm ecstatically towards the sky and says: "The sun," and something else I cannot understand. I smile back and say: "Yes, yes, it is warm." She replies: "Very warm." I say: "This is a beautiful place." She replies: "Yes, sir, very beautiful. The sea is beautiful." I say: "Yes, yes, very beautiful. The butterflies are jolly." She agrees: "Yes, sir, very jolly."

You would hardly realize from this rough translation how extremely enthusiastic, fluent, and satisfying a conversation of this kind can be. By the end of it I feel in a curiously exalted mood as though I had been collaborating in a beautiful poem.

*A Fault of the French*

Anybody, indeed, has only to say to me (in French) "The sea is beautiful," in order to send a wave of

\* This paper is reprinted from the *Daily News* (September 17, 1924), by kind permission of the author.

happiness through me as though I were listening to Sarah Bernhardt speaking verse. The French, indeed, have very beautiful voices or, it may be, very beautiful intonations. The only fault I find with them as conversationists is that they cannot understand my French. The barber who cut my hair certainly cannot have understood it. Before going into his shop I was careful to look up the word "trim" in my dictionary, and read the following:—

**Trim**, *v. a.*, ajuster; (to decorate) parer de (to lop) emonder; (to clip) tailler; (nav.) (the hold) arrimer; (the sails) orienter; (a lamp) préparer; (a garment) garnir. *v. n.*, hesiter; balancer entre deux partis.

Without much hesitation I decided on the word "tailler." I tried the barber both with that and with "pas trop court," and he assented volubly.

I do not know whether there may have been something wrong with my pronunciation, but in two minutes the barber had shorn one side of my head bald and was running up the back of my head with one of those terrible hand mowing-machines that leave the victim only his eyes to weep with. He then showed me the back of my head reflected in a hand-mirror, and, as he looked so pleased and I was not sufficient master of French to tell him what I thought of him, I said gloomily: "C'est beau." Never had I seen so cropped and criminal a type as now confronted me in the looking-glass. I could only stare at it with horror, and, by the time the barber wanted to shampoo me, I could not even summon up the French for "No."

### *A Helpless Sufferer*

I was sorry for this a few moments afterwards, because the barber, having soaped my head, began to fill an immense tin ewer with boiling water, and I

realized that I was going to be the sufferer. In England the barber has a hose, with which he is able to modulate the temperature of the water, but in France, apparently, the only alternatives are a kettleful of boiling water or no hot water at all.

I still think that I deserve the Victoria Cross because I did not scream. I have never felt anything to compare with that scalding Niagara. I dared not even cry "Mercy," for fear of being misunderstood. I had only enough vitality left to shout "Non" when the barber offered to singe me. Even my shouts of "Non" did not stop him when he offered me what he called a "Lubrication" and began to rub it into my hairless head. He said it was "bonne pour la chevelure." But by that time I hadn't any "chevelure" left.

How glad I was to get back to the old woman who told me that the sea was beautiful. "Yes, yes," I said, "very beautiful." "The air," she said, "is very sweet." "Yes," I agreed, "very, very sweet." "And the sun," she said, making a gesture towards the sky. "Yes, yes," I answered, "the sun is very warm, the weather is very beautiful, and the barbers are very jolly."

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## SELECTED LETTERS

## 1. Joseph Addison to William Congreve, the Poet

Blois, December 1699.

SIR,—I was very sorry to hear in your last letter that you were so terribly afflicted with the gout, though for your comfort I believe you are the first English poet that has been complimented with the distemper: I was myself at that time sick of a fever, which I believe proceeded from the same cause; but at present I am so well recovered that I can scarce forbear beginning my letter with Tully's preface *Si vales bene est, ego quidem valeo*. You must excuse me for giving you a line of Latin now and then, since I find myself in some danger of losing the tongue, for I perceive a new language, like a new mistress, is apt to make a man forget all his old ones. I assure you I met with a very remarkable instance of this nature at Paris, in a poor Irishman that had lost the little English he had brought over with him, without being able to learn any French in its stead. I asked him what language he spoke: he very innocently answered me, "No language, Monsieur"; which, as I afterwards found, were all the words he was master of in both tongues. I am at present in a town where all the languages in Europe are spoken except English, which is not to be heard I believe within fifty miles of the place. My greatest diversion is to run over in my

*Si vales bene est, ego quidem valeo.* If you are well, it is good!  
I am well also.

thoughts the variety of noble scenes I was entertained with before I came thither. I do not believe, as good a poet as you are, that you can make finer landscapes than those about the king's houses, or with all your descriptions build a more magnificent palace than Versailles. I am, however, so singular as to prefer Fontainebleau to all the rest. It is situated among rocks and woods that give you a fine variety of savage prospects. The king has humoured the genius of the place, and only made use of so much art as is necessary to help and regulate nature without reforming her too much. The cascades seem to break through the clefts and cracks of rocks, that are covered over with moss, and look as if they were piled upon one another by accident. There is an artificial wildness in the meadows, walks, and canals, and the garden, instead of a wall, is fenced on the lower end by a natural mound of rockwork, that strikes the eye very agreeably. For my part, I think there is something more charming in these rude heaps of stone than in so many statues, and would as soon see a river winding through woods and meadows as when it is tossed up in such a variety of figures at Versailles. But I begin to talk like Dr. Lister. To pass therefore from works of nature to those of art ; in my opinion the pleasantest part of Versailles is the gallery. Every one sees on each side of it something that will be sure to please him, for one of them commands a view of the finest garden in the world, and the other is wainscoted with looking-glass. The history of the present king, till the year 16, is painted on the roof by Le Brun, so that His Majesty has actions enough by him to furnish another gallery much longer than the first. He is represented with all the terror and majesty that you can imagine, in every part of the picture, and sees his young face as perfectly drawn in the roof as his present one in the side. The painter has represented his most Christian Majesty under the figure of Jupiter throwing thunder-

bolts all about the ceiling, and striking terror into the Danube and Rhine, that lie astonished and blasted with lightning a little above the cornice. I believe by this time you are afraid I shall carry you from room to room and lead you through the whole palace ; truly, if I had not tired you already, I could not forbear showing you a staircase that they say is the noblest in its kind ; but after so tedious a letter I shall conclude with a petition to you, that you would deliver the enclosed to Mr. Montagu, for I am afraid of interrupting him with my impertinence when he is engaged in more serious affairs.

*Tu faciles aditus et mollia tempora novis.*

I am, etc.,

J. ADDISON.

## 2. Lord Chesterfield to his Son

LONDON, March 6 (O.S.), 1747.

DEAR BOY,—Whatever you do will always affect me very sensibly one way or another ; and I am now most agreeably affected by two letters which I have lately seen from Lausanne upon your subject ; the one was from Madame St. Germain, the other from Monsieur Pampigny ; they both give so good an account of you, that I thought myself obliged, in justice both to them and to you, to let you know it. Those who deserve a good character ought to have the satisfaction of knowing that they have it, both as a reward and as an encouragement. They write, that you are not only décrotté, but tolerably well-bred ; and that the English crust of awkward bashfulness, shyness, and roughness (of which, by-the-bye, you had your share), is pretty well rubbed off. I am most heartily glad of it ;

*Montagu.* Chancellor of the Exchequer.

*Tu faciles aditus et mollia tempora novis.* You know the easiest means of approach and the most suitable time.

*Décrotté.* Well-mannered.

for, as I have often told you, those lesser talents, of an engaging, insinuating manner, an easy good breeding, a genteel behaviour and address, are of infinitely more advantage than they are generally thought to be, especially here in England. Virtue and learning, like gold, have their intrinsic value ; but if they are not polished, they certainly lose a great deal of their lustre ; and even polished brass will pass upon more people than rough gold. What a number of sins does the cheerful, easy, good breeding of the French frequently cover ! Many of them want common sense, many more common learning ; but in general they make up so much by their manner for those defects, that frequently they pass undiscovered. I have often said, and do think, that a Frenchman, who, with a fund of virtue, learning, and good sense, has the manners and good breeding of his country, is the perfection of human nature. This perfection you may, if you please, and I hope you will, arrive at. You know what virtue is ; you may have it if you will ; it is in every man's power ; and miserable is the man who has it not. Good sense God has given you. Learning you already possess enough of, to have, in a reasonable time, all that a man need have. With this you are thrown out early into the world, where it will be your own fault if you do not acquire all the other accomplishments necessary to complete and adorn your character. You will do well to make your compliments to Madame St. Germain and Monsieur Pampigny, and tell them how sensible you are of their partiality to you, in the advantageous testimonies which, you are informed, they have given of you here.

Adieu ! Continue to deserve such testimonies and then you will not only deserve, but enjoy, my truest affection.

## 3. Dr. Samuel Johnson to Mrs. Thrale

DEAR MADAM,—You talk of writing and writing, as if you had all the writing to yourself. If our correspondence were printed, I am sure posterity, for posterity is always the author's favourite, would say that I am a good writer too. To sit down so often with nothing to say : to say something so often, almost without consciousness of saying, and without any remembrance of having said, is a power of which I will not violate my modesty by boasting, but I do not believe that everybody has it.

Some, when they write to their friends, are all affection ; some are wise and sententious : some strain their powers for efforts of gaiety : some write news, and some write secrets : but to make a letter without affection, without wisdom, without gaiety, without news, and without a secret, is, doubtless, the great epistolic art.

In a man's letters, you know, Madam, his soul lies naked, his letters are only the mirror of his breast : whatever passes within him is shown undisguised in its natural process : nothing is inverted, nothing distorted : you see systems in their elements : you discover actions in their motives.

Of this great truth, sounded by the knowing to the ignorant, and so echoed by the ignorant to the knowing, what evidence have you now before you ! Is not my soul laid open in these veracious pages ? Do you not see me reduced to my first principles ? Is not this the pleasure of corresponding with a friend, where doubt and distrust have no place, and every thing is said as it is thought. The original idea is laid down in its simple purity, and all the supervenient conceptions are spread over it *stratum super stratum*, as they happen to be formed. These are the letters by which souls are united, and by which

minds naturally in unison move each other as they are moved themselves. I know, dearest Lady, that in the perusal of this, such is the consanguinity of our intellects, you will be touched as I am touched. I have concealed nothing from you, nor do I expect ever to repent of having thus opened my heart.—I am, etc.,

SAM JOHNSON.

#### 4. Thomas Gray, the Poet, to an Intimate Friend

PEMBROKE HALL, Aug. 16, 1766.

DEAR SIR,—It is long since that I heard you were gone in haste into Yorkshire on account of your mother's illness, and the same letter informed me that she was recovered, otherwise I had then wrote to you only to beg you would take care of her, and to inform you that I had discovered a thing very little known, which is, that in one's whole life one can never have any more than a single mother. You may think this is obvious, and (what you call) a trite observation. You are a green gosling ! I was at the same age (very near) as wise as you, and yet I never discovered this (with full evidence and conviction I mean) till it was too late. It is thirteen years ago, and seems but as yesterday, and every day I live it sinks deeper into my heart. Many a corollary could I draw from this axiom for your use (not for my own), but I will leave you the merit of doing it for yourself. Pray tell me how your health is : I conclude it perfect, as I hear you offered yourself as a guide to Mr. Palgrave into the Sierra-Morena of Yorkshire. For me, I passed the end of May and all June in Kent, not disagreeably. In the west part of it, from every eminence, the eye catches some long reach of the Thames or Medway, with all their shipping ; in the east the sea breaks in upon you, and mixes its white transient sails and glittering blue expanse with the deeper and brighter greens of the

woods and corn. This sentence is so fine I am quite ashamed ; but no matter ! you must translate it into prose. Palgrave, if he heard it, would cover his face with his pudding sleeve. I do not tell you of the great and small beasts, and creeping things innumerable, that I met with, because you do not suspect that this world is inhabited by anything but men, and women, and clergy, and such two-legged cattle. Now I am here again very disconsolate, and all alone, for Mr. Brown is gone, and the cares of this world are coming thick upon me ; you, I hope, are better off, riding and walking in the woods of Studley, etc., etc. I must not wish for you here ; besides I am going to town at Michaelmas, by no means for amusement.

THOMAS GRAY.

### 5. Oliver Goldsmith to his Mother

MY DEAR MOTHER,—If you will sit down and calmly listen to what I say, you shall be fully resolved in every one of those many questions you have asked me. I went to Cork, and converted my horse, which you prize so much higher than Fiddle-back, into cash, took my passage in a ship bound for America, and at the same time paid the captain for my freight and all the other expenses of my voyage. But it so happened that the wind did not answer for three weeks ; and you know, mother, that I could not command the elements. My misfortune was, that, when the wind served, I happened to be with a party in the country, and my friend the captain never inquired after me, but set sail with as much indifference as if I had been on board. The remainder of my time I employed in the city and its environs, viewing everything curious, and you know no one can starve while he has money in his pocket.

Reduced, however, to my last two guineas, I began

to think of my dear mother and friends whom I had left behind me, and so bought that generous beast Fiddle-back, and bade adieu to Cork with only five shillings in my pocket. This, to be sure, was but a scanty allowance for man and horse towards a journey of above a hundred miles ; but I did not despair, for I knew I must find friends on the road.

I recollect particularly an old and faithful acquaintance I made at college, who had often and earnestly pressed me to spend a summer with him, and he lived but eight miles from Cork. This circumstance of vicinity he would expatiate on to me with peculiar emphasis. “ We shall,” says he, “ enjoy the delights of both city and country, and you shall command my stable and my purse.”

However, upon the way, I met a poor woman all in tears, who told me her husband had been arrested for a debt he was not able to pay, and that his eight children must now starve, bereaved as they were of his industry, which had been their only support. I thought myself at home, being not far from my good friend’s house, and therefore parted with a moiety of all my store ; and, pray, mother, ought I not have given her the other half-crown, for what she got would be of little use to her ? However, I soon arrived at the mansion of my affectionate friend, guarded by the vigilance of a huge mastiff, who flew at me, and would have torn me to pieces but for the assistance of a woman, whose countenance was not less grim than that of the dog ; yet she with great humanity relieved me from the jaws of this Cerberus, and was prevailed on to carry up my name to her master.

Without suffering me to wait long, my old friend, who was then recovering from a severe fit of sickness, came down in his nightcap, nightgown, and slippers, and embraced me with the most cordial welcome,

*Cerberus.* Cerberus in classical mythology is the watch-dog of the infernal regions.

showed me in, and, after giving me a history of indisposition, assured me that he considered himself peculiarly fortunate in having under his roof the man he most loved on earth, and whose stay with him must, above all things, contribute to his perfect recovery. I now repented sorely I had not given the poor woman the other half-crown, as I thought all my bills of humanity would be punctually answered by this worthy man. I revealed to him all my distresses, and freely owned that I had but one half-crown in my pocket ; but that now, like a ship after weathering out the storm, I considered myself secure in a safe and hospitable harbour. He made no answer, but walked about the room, rubbing his hands as one in deep study. This I imputed to the sympathetic feelings of a tender heart, which increased my esteem for him, and as that increased, I gave the most favourable interpretation to his silence. I construed it in delicacy of sentiment, as if he dreaded to wound my pride by expressing his commiseration in words, leaving his generous conduct to speak for itself.

It now approached six o'clock in the evening ; and as I had eaten no breakfast, and as my spirits were raised, my appetite for dinner grew uncommonly keen. At length the old woman came into the room with two plates, one spoon, and a dirty cloth, which she laid upon the table. This appearance, without increasing my spirits, did not diminish my appetite. My protectress soon returned with a small bowl of sago, a small porringer of sour milk, a loaf of stale brown bread, and the heel of an old cheese all over crawling with mites. My friend apologized that his illness obliged him to live on slops, and that better fare was not in the house ; observing, at the same time, that a milk diet was certainly the most healthful ; and at eight o'clock he again recommended a regular life, declaring that for his part he would lie down with the lamb and rise with the lark. M

hunger was at this time so exceedingly sharp that I wished for another slice of the loaf, but was obliged to go to bed without even that refreshment.

This lenten entertainment I had received made me resolve to depart as soon as possible ; accordingly, next morning, when I spoke of going, he did not oppose my resolution ; he rather commended my design, adding some very sage counsel upon the occasion. “ To be sure,” said he, “ the longer you stay away from your mother the more you will grieve her and your other friends ; and possibly they are already afflicted at hearing of this foolish expedition you have made.” Notwithstanding all this, and without any hope of softening such a sordid heart, I again renewed the tale of my distress, and asking “ how he thought I could travel above a hundred miles upon one half-crown ? ” I begged to borrow a single guinea, which I assured him should be repaid with thanks. “ And you know, sir,” said I, “ it is no more than I have done for you.” To which he firmly answered, “ Why, look you, Mr. Goldsmith, that is neither here nor there, I have paid you all you ever lent me, and this sickness of mine has left me bare of cash. But I have bethought myself of a conveyance for you ; sell your horse, and I will furnish you a much better one to ride on.” I readily grasped at his proposal, and begged to see the nag ; on which he led me to his bed chamber, and from under the bed he pulled out a stout oak stick. “ Here he is,” said he ; “ take this in your hand, and it will carry you to your mother’s with more safety than such a horse as you ride.” I was in doubt, when I got it into my hand, whether I should not, in the first place, apply it to his pate ; but a rap at the street door made the wretch fly to it, and when I returned to the parlour, he introduced me, as if nothing of the kind had happened, to the gentleman who entered, as Mr. Goldsmith, his most ingenious and worthy friend, of whom he had so often heard

him speak with rapture. I could scarcely compose myself ; and must have betrayed indignation in my mien to the stranger, who was a counsellor-at-law in the neighbourhood, a man of engaging aspect and polite address.

After spending an hour, he asked my friend and me to dine with him at his house. This I declined at first, as I wished to have no further communication with my hospitable friend ; but at the solicitation of both I at last consented, determined as I was by two motives ; one, that I was prejudiced in favour of the looks and manner of the counsellor ; and the other, that I stood in need of a comfortable dinner. And there, indeed, I found everything that I could wish, abundance without profusion, and elegance without affectation. In the evening, when my old friend, who had eaten very plentifully at his neighbour's table, but talked again of lying down with the lamb, made a motion to me for retiring, our generous host requested I should take a bed with him, upon which I plainly told my old friend that he might go home and take care of the horse he had given me, but that I should never re-enter his doors. He went away with a laugh, leaving me to add this to the other little things the counsellor already knew of his plausible neighbour.

And now, my dear mother, I found sufficient to reconcile me to all my follies ; for here I spent three whole days. The counsellor had two sweet girls to his daughters, who played enchantingly on the harpsichord ; and yet it was but a melancholy pleasure I felt the first time I heard them : for that being the first time also that either of them had touched the instrument since their mother's death, I saw the tears in silence trickle down their father's cheeks. I every day endeavoured to go away, but every day was pressed and obliged to stay. On my going, the counsellor offered me his purse, with a horse and servant

to convey me home: but the latter I declined, and only took a guinea to bear my necessary expenses on the road.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

To Mrs. Anne Goldsmith, Ballymahon.

#### 6. John Wesley to his Brother

DEAR BROTHER,—All last week I found hanging upon me the effects of a violent cold I had contracted in Wales; not, I think, by lying in a damp bed at St. Bride's; but rather by riding continually in the cold and wet nights, and preaching immediately after. But I believed it would pass off, and so took little notice of it until Friday morning: I then found myself exceeding sick; and as I walked to Baptist-Mills, (to pray with Susanna Basil, who was ill of a fever,) felt the wind pierce me, as it were, through. At my return, I found myself something better; only I could not eat any thing at all: yet I felt no want of strength at the hour of intercession, nor at six in the evening, while I was opening and applying those words: “Sun, stand thou still in Gibeon; and thou Moon in the valley of Ajalon.” I was afterwards refreshed, and slept well; so that I apprehended no further disorder, but rose in the morning as usual, and declared, with a strong voice and enlarged heart, “Neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith that worketh by love.” About two in the afternoon, just as I was set down to dinner, a shivering came upon me, and a little pain in my back, but no sickness at all, so that I eat a little; and then growing warm, went to see some that were sick. Finding myself worse, about four, I would willingly have laid down; but having promised to see Mrs. G—, who had been out of order for some days, I went thither first, and thence to Weaver's Hall. A man gave me a token for

good as I went along : "Aye," said he, "he will be a martyr too by and by." The Scripture I enforced was, " My little children, these things I write unto you, that ye sin not. But if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." I found no want, either of inward or outward strength ; but afterwards, finding my fever increased, I called on Dr. Middleton. By his advice, I went home and took my bed ; a strange thing to me who had not kept my bed a day (for five and thirty years) ever since I had the small-pox. I immediately fell into a profuse sweat, which continued until one or two in the morning. God then gave me refreshing sleep, and afterwards such tranquillity of mind, that this day, Sunday, November 1, seemed the shortest day to me I had ever known in my life.

### 7. Lord Jeffrey to a Grandchild

CRAIGCROOK, June 20, 1848.

MY SONSY NANCY !—I love you very much, and think very often of your dimples, and your pimples, and your funny little plays, and all your pretty ways ; and I send you my blessing, and wish I were kissing your sweet rosy lips, or your fat finger-tips ; and that you were here, so that I could hear you stammering words, from a mouthful of curds ; and a great purple tongue (as broad as it's long) ; and see your round eyes, open wide with surprise, and your wondering look to find yourself at Craigcrook ! To-morrow is Maggie's birthday, and we have built up a great bonfire in honour of it ; and Maggie Rutherford (do you remember her at all ?) is coming out to dance round it ; and all the servants are to drink her health, and wish her many happy days with you and Frankie,—and all the mammays and pappys, whether grand or not grand. We are

very glad to hear that she and you love each other so well, and are happy in making each other happy ; and that you do not forget dear Tarley or Frankie, when they are out of sight, nor Granny either,—or even old Granny pa, who is in most danger of being forgotten, he thinks. We have had showery weather here, but the garden is full of flowers ; and Frankie has a new wheel-barrow, and does a great deal of work, and some mischief now and then. All the dogs are very well ; and Foxey is mine, and Froggy is Tarley's, and Frankie has taken up with great white Neddy,—so that nothing is left for Granny but old barking Jacky and Dover when the carriage comes. The donkey sends his compliments to you, and maintains that you are a cousin of his ! or a near relation, at all events. He wishes, too, that you and Maggie would come ; for he thinks that you will not be so heavy on his back as Tarley and Maggie Rutherford, who now ride him without mercy.

This is Sunday, and Ali is at church—Granny and I taking care of Frankie till she comes back, and he is now hammering very busily at a corner of the carpet, which he says does not lie flat. He is very good, and really too pretty for a boy, though I think his two eyebrows are growing into one,—stretching and meeting each other above his nose ! But he has not so many freckles as Tarley, who has a very fine crop of them, which she and I encourage as much as we can. I hope you and Maggie will lay in a stock of them, as I think no little girl can be pretty without them in summer. Our pea-hens are suspected of having young families in some hidden place, for though they pay us short visits now and then, we see them but seldom, and always alone. If you and Maggie were here with your sharp eyes, we think you might find out their secret, and introduce us to a nice new family of young peas. The old papa cock, in the meantime says he knows nothing about them, and does not care a farthing !

We envy you your peas of another kind, for we have none yet, nor any asparagus neither, and hope you will bring some down to us in your lap. Tarley sends her love, and I send mine to you all ; though I shall think most of Maggie to-morrow morning, and of you when your birth morning comes. When is that do you know ? It is never dark now here, and we might all go to bed without candles. And so bless you ever and ever, my dear dimply pussie.—Your very loving  
GRANDPA.

### 8. William Hazlitt to his Son.

MY DEAR LITTLE FELLOW,—You are now going to settle at school, and may consider this as your first entrance into the world. As my health is so indifferent, and I may not be with you long, I wish to leave you some advice (the best I can) for your conduct in life, both that it may be of use to you, and as something to remember me by. I may at least be able to caution you against my own errors, if nothing else.

As we went along to your new place of destination, you often repeated that you durst say that they were a set of stupid, disagreeable people, meaning the people at the school. You were to blame in this. It is a good old rule to hope for the best. Always, my dear, believe things to be right till you find them the contrary ; and even then, instead of irritating yourself against them, endeavour to put up with them as well as you can, if you cannot alter them. You said you were sure you should not like the school where you were going. This was wrong. What you meant was that you did not like to leave home. But you could not tell whether you should like the school or not, till you had given it a trial. Otherwise, your saying that you should not like it was determining that you

would not like it. Never anticipate evils ; or, because you cannot have things exactly as you wish, make them out worse than they are, through mere spite and wilfulness.

You seemed at first to take no notice of your school-fellows, or rather to set yourself against them, because they were strangers to you. They knew as little of you as you did of them ; so that this would have been a reason for their keeping aloof from you as well, which you would have felt as a hardship. Learn never to conceive a prejudice against others because you know nothing of them. It is bad reasoning, and makes enemies of half the world. Do not think ill of them till they behave ill to you ; and then strive to avoid the faults which you see in them. This will disarm their hostility sooner than pique or resentment or complaint.

I thought you were disposed to criticize the dress of some of the boys as not so good as your own. Never despise any one for anything that he cannot help—least of all, for his poverty. I would wish you to keep up appearances yourself as a defence against the idle sneers of the world, but I would not have you value yourself upon them. I hope you will neither be the dupe nor victim of vulgar prejudices. Instead of saying above, “Never despise any one for anything that he cannot help,” I might have said, “Never despise any one at all”; for contempt implies a triumph over and pleasure in the ill of another. It means that you are glad and congratulate yourself on their failings or misfortunes.

You complain since, that the boys laugh at you and do not care about you, and that you are not treated as you were at home. My dear, that is one chief reason for you being sent to school, to inure you betimes to the unavoidable rubs and uncertain reception you may meet with in life. You cannot always be with me, and perhaps it is as well that you cannot. But you must

not expect others to show the same concern about you as I should. You have hitherto been a spoiled child, and have been used to have your own way a good deal, both in the house and among your playfellows, with whom you were too fond of being a leader ; but you have good-nature and good sense, and will get the better of this in time. You have now got among other boys who are your equals, or bigger and stronger than yourself, and who have something else to attend to besides humouring your whims and fancies, and you feel this as a repulse or piece of injustice. But the first lesson to learn is that there are other people in the world besides yourself.

There are a number of boys in the school where you are, whose amusements and pursuits (whatever they may be) are and ought to be of as much consequence to them as yours can be to you, and to which therefore you must give way in your turn. The more airs of childish self-importance you give yourself, you will only expose yourself to be the more thwarted and laughed at. True equality is the only true morality or true wisdom. Remember always that you are but one among others, and you can hardly mistake your place in society. In your father's house you might do as you pleased : in the world you will find competitors at every turn. You are not born a king's son, to destroy or dictate to millions ; you can only expect to share their fate, or settle your differences amicably with them. You already find it so at school, and I wish you to be reconciled to your situation as soon and with as little pain as you can.—I am, dear little fellow, your affectionate father,

W. HAZLITT.

## 9. Thomas Hood to a Little Boy Friend.

DEVONSHIRE LODGE, NEW FINCHLEY ROAD,  
ST. JOHN'S WOOD, *July 1st.*

MY DEAR DUNNIE,—I have heard of your doings at Sandgate, and that you were so happy at getting to the sea, that you were obliged to be flogged a little to moderate it, and keep some for next day. I am very fond of the sea, too, though I have been twice nearly drowned by it ; once in a storm in a ship and once under a boat's bottom when I was bathing. Of course you have bathed, but have you learned to swim yet ? It is rather easy in salt water, and diving is still easier, even, than at the sink. I only swim in fancy, and strike out new ideas !

Is not the tide curious ? Though I cannot say much for its tidiness ; it makes such a slop and litter on the beach. It comes and goes as regularly as the boys of a proprietary school, but has no holidays. And what a rattle the waves make with the stones when they are rough ; you will find some rolled into decent marbles and bounces : and sometimes you may hear the sound of a heavy sea, at a distance, like a giant snoring. Some people say that every ninth wave is bigger than the rest. I have often counted, but never found it come true, except with tailors, of whom every ninth is a man. But in rough weather there are giant waves, bigger than the rest, that come in trios, from which, I suppose, Britannia rules the waves by the rule of three. When I was a boy, I loved to play with the sea, in spite of its sometimes getting rather rough. I and my brother chucked hundreds of stones into it, as you do ; but we came away before we could fill it up. In those days we were at war with France. Unluckily, it's peace now, or with so many stones you might have good fun for days in pelting the enemy's coast. Once I almost thought I nearly hit Boney !

Then there was looking for an island like Robinson Crusoe ! Have you ever found one yet, surrounded by water ? I remember once staying on the beach, when the tide was flowing, till I was a peninsula, and only by running turned myself into a continent.

Then there's fishing at the seaside. I used to catch flat fish with a very long string line. It was like swimming a kite ! But perhaps there are no flat fish at Sandgate—except your shoe-soles. The best plan, if you want flat fish where there are none, is to bring codlings and hammer them into dabs. Once I caught a plaice, and, seeing it all over red spots, thought I had caught the measles.

Do you ever long, when you are looking at the sea, for a voyage ? If I were off Sandgate with my yacht (only she is not yet built), I would give you a cruise in her. In the meantime you can practise sailing any little boat you can get. But mind that it does not flounder or get squamped, as some people say, instead of "founder" and "swamp." I have been swamped myself by malaria, and almost foundered, which reminds me that Tom, junior, being very ingenious, has made a cork model of a divingbell that won't sink !

By this time, I suppose, you are become, instead of a land-boy, a regular sea-urchin ; and so amphibious, that you can walk on the land as well as on the water—or better. And don't you mean, when you grow up, to go to sea ? Should you not like to be a little midshipman ? or half a quarter-master, with a cocked hat, and a dirk, that will be a sword by the time you are a man ? If you do resolve to be a post-captain, let me know ; and I will endeavour through my interest with the Commissioners of Pavements, to get you a post to jump over of the proper height. Tom is just rigging a boat, so I suppose that he inclines to be an Admiral of the Marines. But before you decide, remember the port-holes, and that there are great guns in those battle-doors that will blow you into

shuttlecocks, which is a worse game than whoop and hide—as to a good hiding !

And so farewell, young “ Old Fellow,” and take care of yourself so near the sea, for in some places, they say, it has not even a bottom to go to if you fall in. And remember when you are bathing, if you meet with a shark, the best way is to bite off his legs, if you can, before he walks off with yours,—and so, hoping you will be better soon, for somebody told me you had had the shingles, I am, my dear Dunnie, your affectionate friend,

THOMAS HOOD.

*P.S.*—I have heard that at Sandgate there used to be lobsters ; but some ignorant fairy turned them all by a spell into bolsters.

## 10. Lewis Carroll to a Little Girl

CHRIST CHURCH, OXFORD, Dec. 9, 1875.

MY DEAR GERTRUDE,—This really will not do, you know, sending one more kiss every time by post ; the parcel gets so heavy it is quite expensive. When the postman brought in the last letter, he looked quite grave. “ Two pounds to pay, sir ! ” he said. “ Extra weight, sir ! ” (I think he cheats a little, by the way. He often makes me pay two pounds, when I think it should be pence.) “ Oh, if you please, Mr. Postman ! ” I said, going down gracefully on one knee (I wish you could see me going down gracefully on one knee to a postman—it’s a very pretty sight), “ do excuse me just this once ! It’s only from a little girl ! ”

“ Only from a little girl ! ” he growled. “ What are little girls made of ? ” “ Sugar and spice,” I began to say, “ and all that’s ni—— ” but he interrupted me. “ No ! I don’t mean that. I mean, what’s the good of little girls, when they send such heavy letters ? ”

“ Well, they’re not much good, certainly,” I said, rather sadly.

“ Mind you don’t get any more such letters,” he said, “ at least, not from that particular little girl. I know her well, and she’s a regular bad one ! ” That’s not true, is it ? I don’t believe he ever saw you, and you’re not a bad one, are you ? However, I promised him we would send each other very few more letters—“ Only two thousand four hundred and seventy, or so,” I said. “ Oh ! ” he said, “ a little number like that doesn’t signify. What I meant is, you mustn’t send many.”

So you see we must keep count now, and when we get to two thousand four hundred and seventy, we mustn’t write any more, unless the postman gives us leave.

I sometimes wish I was back on the shore at Sandown ; don’t you ?—Your loving friend,

LEWIS CARROLL.

Why is a pig that has lost its tail like a little girl on the sea-shore ?

Because it says, “ I should like another tale, please.”

## EXTRACTS FROM DIARIES AND JOURNALS

1. *Samuel Pepys*

[This famous diary was written between 1660 and 1669, and its author was Secretary to the Admiralty. Dates have been omitted in connection with some of the following passages, and the selection has been made to show the many varied interests of the diarist.]

*25th May 1660. King Charles lands at Dover.\*—*  
By the morning we were come close to the land, and everybody made ready to get on shore. The King and the two Dukes did eat their breakfast before they went, and there being set some ship's diet before them, only to show them the manner of the ship's diet, they eat of nothing else but pease and pork, and boiled beef.

. . . So got on shore when the King did, who was received by General Monk with all imaginable love and respect at his entrance upon the land of Dover. Infinite the crowd of people and the horsemen, citizens, and noblemen of all sorts. The Mayor of the town came and gave him his white staff, the badge of his place, which the King did give him again. The Mayor also presented him from the town a very rich Bible, which he took and said it was the thing that he loved above all things in the world. A canopy was provided for him to stand under, which he did, and talked awhile with General Monk and others, and so into a stately coach there set for him, and so away through

\* Pepys came over with him from the Hague.

the town towards Canterbury, without making any stay at Dover. The shouting and joy expressed by all is past imagination.

All the morning at the office, and at noon home to dinner, and thence with my wife and Deb. to the King's House, to see *The Virgin Martyr*, the first time it hath been acted a great while ; and it is mighty pleasant ; not that the play is worth much, but it is finely acted by Becke Marshal. But that which did please me beyond anything in the whole world was the wind-musique when the angel comes down, which is so sweet that it ravished me, and indeed, in a word, did wrap up my soul so that it made me really sick, that neither then, nor all the evening going home, I was able to think of anything, but remained all night transported, so as I could not believe that ever any musique hath that real command over the soul of a man as this did upon me : and makes me resolve to practice wind-musique, and to make my wife do the like. . . .

We also to church, and then home, and there comes Mr. Pelling, with two men, by promise, one Wallington and Piggott, the former whereof, being a very little fellow, did sing a most excellent base, and yet a poor fellow, a working goldsmith, that goes without gloves to his hands. Here we sung several good things, but I am more and more confirmed that singing with many voices is not singing, but a sort of instrumental musique, the sense of the words being lost by not being heard, and especially as they set them with fuges of words, one after another, whereas singing properly, I think, should be but with one or two voices at most and the counterpoint.

Home from my office to my lord's lodgings, where my wife had got ready a very fine dinner—viz., a dish

of marrow bones ; a leg of mutton ; a loin of veal ; a dish of fowl, three pullets, and two dozen of larks all in a dish ; a great tart, a neat's tongue, a dish of anchovies ; a dish of prawns and cheese.

At noon come my good guests, Madame Turner, and Cozen Norton, and a gentleman, one Mr. Lewin of the King's Life Guard ; . . . I had a pretty dinner for them, viz., a brace of stewed carps, six roasted chickens, and a jowl of salmon, hot, for the first course ; a tanzy and two neat's tongues, and cheese, the second ; and were very merry all the afternoon, talking and singing and piping upon the flageolette. In the evening they went with great pleasure away, and I with great content and my wife walked half an hour in the garden, and so home to supper and to bed.

So home, and found my wife's new gown come home, and she mighty pleased with it. But I appeared very angry that there were no more things got ready against to-morrow's feast, and in that passion sat up long, and went discontented to bed.

So my poor wife rose by five o'clock in the morning, before day, and went to market and bought fowls and many other things for dinner, with which I was highly pleased, and the chine of beef was down also before six o'clock, and my own jack, of which I was doubtful, do carry it very well. Things being put in order, and the cook come, I went to the office, where we sat till noon and then broke up, and I home, whither by and by comes Dr. Clerke and his lady, a sister, and a she-cozen, and Mr. Pierce and his wife, which was all my guests. I had for them, after oysters, at first course, a hash of rabbits, a lamb, and a rare chine of beef. Next a great dish of roasted fowl, cost me about 30s., and a tart, and then fruit and cheese. My dinner was noble and enough. I had my house mighty clean and neat ; my room below with a good fire in it ; my

dining-room above, and my chamber being made a withdrawing chamber ; and my wife's a good fire also. I find my new table very proper, and will hold nine or ten people well, but eight with great room. After dinner the women to cards in my wife's chamber, and the Dr. and Mr. Pierce in mine, because the dining-room smokes unless I keep a good charcoal fire, which I was not then provided with. At night to supper, had a good sack posset and cold meat, and sent my guests away about ten o'clock at night, both them and myself highly pleased with our management of this day ; and indeed their company was very fine, and Mrs. Clerke a very witty fine lady, though a little conceited and proud. So weary, so to bed. I believe this day's feast will cost me near £5.

*14th July.* (Lord's day.)—Up, and my wife, a little before four, and to make us ready ; and by-and-by Mrs. Turner came to us, by agreement, and she and I staid talking below, while my wife dressed herself, which vexed me that she was so long about it, keeping us till past five o'clock before she was ready. She ready ; and, taking some bottles of wine, and beer, and some cold fowle with us into the coach, we took coach and four horses, which I had provided last night, and so away. A very fine day, and so towards Epsom, talking all the way pleasantly, and particularly of the pride and ignorance of Mrs. Lowther, in having of her train carried up. The country very fine, only the way very dusty. To Epsom, by eight o'clock, to the well ; where much company, and I drank the water : they did not, but I did drink four pints. And to the towne, to the King's Head ; and hear that my Lord Buckhurst and Nelly are lodged at the next house, and Sir Charles Sedley with them : and keep a merry house. Poor girl ! I pity her ; but more the loss of her at the King's house. W. Hewer rode with us, and I left him and the women, and myself walked to

church, where few people to what I expected, and none I knew, but all the Houlbons, brothers, and them after sermon I did salute, and walk with towards my inne. James did tell me that I was the only happy man of the Navy, of whom, he says, during all this freedom the people have taken to speaking treason, he hath not heard one bad word of me, which is a great joy to me ; for I hear the same of others, but do know that I have deserved as well as most. We parted to meet anon, and I to my women into a better room, which the people of the house borrowed for us, and there to a good dinner, and were merry, and Pembleton come to us, who happened to be in the house, and there talked and were merry. After dinner, he gone, we all lay down, the day being wonderful hot, to sleep, and each of us took a good nap, and then rose ; and here Tom Wilson come to see me, and sat and talked an hour ; and I perceive he hath been much acquainted with Dr. Fuller (Tom) and Dr. Pierson, and several of the great cavalier parsons during the late troubles ; and I was glad to hear him talk of them, which he did very ingenuously, and very much of Dr. Fuller's art of memory, which he did tell me several instances of. By and by he parted, and we took coach and to take the ayre, there being a fine breeze abroad ; and I carried them to the well, and there filled some bottles of water to carry home with me ; and there I talked with the two women that farm the well, at £12 per annum, of the lord of the manor. Mr. Evelyn with his lady, and also my Lord George Barkeley's lady, and their fine daughter, that the King of France liked so well, and did dance so rich in jewels before the King at the ball I was at, at our Court, last winter, and also their son, a Knight of the Bath, were at church this morning. Here W. Hewer's horse broke loose, and we had the sport to see him taken again. Then I carried them to see my cozen Pepys's house, and 'light, and walked round

about it, and they like it, as indeed it deserves, very well, and is a pretty place ; and then I walked them to the wood hard by, and there got them in the thickets till they had lost themselves, and I could not find the way into any of the walks in the wood, which indeed are very pleasant, if I could have found them. At last got out of the wood again ; and I, by leaping down the little bank, coming out of the wood, did sprain my right foot, which brought me great present pain, but presently, with walking, it went away for the present, and so the women and W. Hewer and I walked upon the Downes, where a flock of sheep was ; and the most pleasant and innocent sight that ever I saw in my life. We found a shepherd and his little boy reading, far from any houses or sight of people, the Bible to him ; so I made the boy read to me, which he did, with the forced tone that children do usually read, that was mighty pretty, and then I did give him something, and went to the father, and talked with him ; and I find he had been a servant in my cozen Pepys's house, and told me what was become of their old servants. He did content himself mightily in my liking of the boy's reading, and did bless God for him, the most like one of the old patriarchs that ever I saw in my life, and it brought those thoughts of the old age of the world in my mind for two or three days after. We took notice of his woollen knit stockings of two colours mixed, and of his shoes shod with iron, both at the toe and heels, and with great nails in the soles of his feet, which was mighty pretty : and, taking notice of them, why, says the poor man, the downes, you see, are full of stones, and we are faine to shoe ourselves thus ; and these, says he, will make the stones fly till they ring before me. I did give the poor man something, for which he was mighty thankful, and I tried to cast stones with his horne crooke. He values his dog mighty, that would turn a sheep any way which he would have

him, when he goes to fold them : told me there was about eighteen score sheep in his flock, and that he hath four shillings a week the year round for keeping of them : and Mrs. Turner, in the common fields here, did gather one of the prettiest nosegays that ever I saw in my life. So to our coach, and through Mr. Minnes's wood, and looked upon Mr. Evelyn's house ; and so over the common, and through Epsom towne to our inne, in the way stopping a poor woman with her milk-pail, and in one of my gilt tumblers, did drink our fill of milk, better than any creame ; and so to our inne, and there had a dish of creame, but it was sour, and so had no pleasure in it ; and so paid our reckoning, and took coach, it being about seven at night, and passed and saw the people walking with their wives and children to take the ayre, and we set out for home, the sun by-and-by going down, and we in the cool of the evening all the way with much pleasure home, talking and pleasing ourselves with the pleasures of this day's work. Mrs. Turner mightily pleased with my resolution, which, I tell her, is never to keep a country-house, but to keep a coach, and with my wife on the Saturday to go sometimes for a day to this place, and then quit to another place ; and there is more variety and as little charge, and no trouble, as there is in a country-house. Anon it drew dark, and we had the pleasure to see several glow-wormes, which was mighty pretty, but my foot begins more and more to pain me, which Mrs. Turner, by keeping her warm hand upon it, did much ease ; but so that when we come home, which was just at eleven at night, I was not able to walk from the lane's end to my house without being helped. So to bed, and there had a cere-cloth laid to my foot, but in great pain all night long.

## 2. John Evelyn

[John Evelyn was an English gentleman who lived at Sayes Court, Deptford, near London, and kept a diary at about the same time as Pepys.]

*2nd September 1666. The Great Fire of London.*—This fatal night, about ten, began the deplorable fire, near Fish-street, in London.

*3rd.*—I had public prayers at home. The fire continuing, after dinner I took a coach with my wife and son, and went to the Bankside in Southwark, where we beheld that dismal spectacle, the whole City in dreadful flames near the water-side ; all the houses from the Bridge, all Thames-street, and upwards towards Cheapside, down to the Three Cranes, were now consumed ; and so returned, exceeding astonished what would become of the rest. The fire having continued all this night (if I may call that night which was light as day for ten miles round about, after a dreadful manner), when conspiring with a fierce eastern wind in a very dry season, I went on foot to the same place ; and saw the whole south part of the City burning from Cheapside to the Thames, and all along Cornhill (for it likewise kindled back against the wind, as well as forward), Tower-street, Fenchurch-street, Gracious-street, and so along to Baynard's Castle, and was now taking hold of St. Paul's Church, to which the scaffolds contributed exceedingly. The conflagration was so universal, and the people so astonished, that, from the beginning, I know not by what despondency, or fate, they hardly stirred to quench it ; so that there was not nothing heard, or seen, but crying out and lamentation, running about like distracted creatures, without at all attempting to save even their goods ; such a strange consternation there was upon them, so as it burned both in breadth and length, the

churches, public halls, Exchange, hospitals, monuments, and ornaments ; leaping after a prodigious manner from house to house, and street to street, at great distances one from the other. For the heat, with a long set of fair and warm weather, had even ignited the air, and prepared the materials to conceive the fire, which devoured, after an incredible manner, houses, furniture, and everything. Here, we saw the Thames covered with goods floating, all the barges and boats laden with what some had time and courage to save, as, on the other side, the carts, etc., carrying out to the fields, which for many miles were strewed with movables of all sorts, and tents erecting to shelter both people and what goods they could get away. Oh, the miserable and calamitous spectacle ! such as haply the world had not seen since the foundation of it, nor be outdone till the universal conflagration thereof. All the sky was of a fiery aspect, like the top of a burning oven, and the light seen above forty miles round about for many nights. God grant mine eyes may never behold the like, who now saw above ten thousand houses all in one flame ! The noise and crackling and thunder of the impetuous flames, the shrieking of women and children, the hurry of people, the fall of towers, houses, and churches, was like a hideous storm ; and the air all about so hot and inflamed, that at the last one was not able to approach it, so that they were forced to stand still, and let the flames burn on, which they did, for near two miles in length and one in breadth. The clouds also of smoke were dismal, and reached, upon computation, near fifty miles in length. Thus, I left it this afternoon burning, resemblance of Sodom, or the last day. It forcibly called to my mind that passage—*non enim hic habemus stabilem civitatem* : the ruins resembling the picture of Troy. London was, but is no more ! Thus, I returned.

4th September.—The burning still rages, and it is

now gotten as far as the Inner Temple. All Fleet-street, the Old Bailey, Ludgate-hill, Warwick-lane, Newgate, Paul's-chain, Watling-street, now flaming, and most of it reduced to ashes ; the stones of Paul's flew like grenadoes, the melting lead running down the streets in a stream, and the very pavements glowing with fiery redness, so as no horse, nor man, was able to tread on them, and the demolition had stopped all the pasages, so that no help could be applied. The eastern wind still more impetuously driving the flames forward. Nothing but the Almighty power of God was able to stop them ; for vain was the help of man.

*6th January 1683-4. The Great Frost.*—The river quite frozen.

*9th.*—I went across the Thames on the ice, now become so thick as to bear not only streets of booths, in which they roasted meat, and had divers shops of wares, quite across as in a town, but coaches, carts, and horses passed over. So I went from Westminster-stairs to Lambeth, and dined with the Archbishop : where I met my Lord Bruce, Sir George Wheler, Colonel Cooke, and several divines. After dinner and discourse with his Grace till evening prayers, Sir George Wheler and I walked over the ice from Lambeth-stairs to the Horse-ferry.

*10th.*—I visited Sir Robert Reading, where after supper we had music, but not comparable to that which Mrs. Bridgeman made us on the guitar with such extraordinary skill and dexterity.

*16th.*—The Thames was filled with people and tents, selling all sorts of wares as in the City.

*24th.*—The frost continuing more and more severe, the Thames before London was still planted with booths in formal streets, all sorts of trades and shops furnished, and full of commodities, even to a printing-press, where the people and ladies took a fancy to have their names printed, and the day and year set down

when printed on the Thames: this humour took so universally, that it was estimated the printer gained five pounds a day, for printing a line only, at six-pence a name, besides what he got by ballads, etc. Coaches plied from Westminster to the Temple, and from several other stairs to and fro, as in the streets, sleds, sliding with skates, a bull-baiting, horse- and coach-races, puppet-plays and interludes, cooks, tippling, and other lewd places, so that it seemed to be a bacchanalian triumph, or carnival on the water, whilst it was a severe judgment on the land, the trees not only splitting as if lightning-struck, but men and cattle perishing in divers places, and the very seas so locked up with ice, that no vessels could stir out or come in. The fowls, fish, and birds, and all our exotic plants and greens, universally perishing. Many parks of deer were destroyed, and all sorts of fuel so dear, that there were great contributions to preserve the poor alive. Nor was this severe weather much less intense in most parts of Europe, even as far as Spain and the most southern tracts. London, by reason of the excessive coldness of the air hindering the ascent of the smoke, was so filled with the fuliginous steam of the sea-coal, that hardly could one see across the streets, and this filling the lungs with its gross particles, exceedingly obstructed the breast, so as one could scarcely breathe. Here was no water to be had from the pipes and engines, nor could the brewers and divers other tradesmen work, and every moment was full of disastrous accidents.

*4th February.*—I went to Sayes Court to see how the frost had dealt with my garden, where I found many of the greens and rare plants utterly destroyed. The oranges and myrtles very sick, the rosemary and laurels dead to all appearance, but the cypress likely to endure it.

*5th.*—It began to thaw, but froze again. My coach crossed from Lambeth to the Horse-ferry at Millbank,

Westminster. The booths were almost all taken down ; but there was first a map or landscape cut in copper representing all the manner of the camp, and the several actions, sports, and pastimes thereon, in memory of so signal a frost.

### 3. John Wesley

*Monday, 4th June 1739. At Bath.*—Many came to me and earnestly advised me not to preach abroad in the afternoon, because there was a combination of several persons who threatened terrible things. This report being spread abroad brought many thither of the better sort of people (so called), and added, I believe, more than a thousand to the ordinary congregation. The Scripture to which, not my choice, but the providence of God, directed me, was, “ Fear not thou, for I am with thee : be not dismayed, for I am thy God. I will strengthen thee ; yea, I will help thee ; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of My righteousness.” The power of God came with His word, so that none scoffed, or interrupted, or opened his mouth.

*Tuesday, 5th.*—There was great expectation at Bath of what a noted man was to do to me there ; and I was much entreated not to preach, because no one knew what might happen. By this report I also gained a much larger audience, among whom were many of the rich and the great. I told them plainly the Scripture had concluded them all under sin—high and low, rich and poor, one with another. Many of them seemed to be a little surprised, and were sinking apace into seriousness, when their champion appeared and, coming close to me, asked by what authority I did these things. I replied, “ By the authority of Jesus Christ, conveyed to me by the (now) Archbishop of Canterbury, when he laid hands upon me, and said,

‘Take thou authority to preach the gospel.’” He said, “This is contrary to Act of Parliament: this is a conventicle.” I answered, “Sir, the conventicles mentioned in that Act (as the preamble shows) are seditious meetings; but this is not such; here is no shadow of sedition; therefore it is not contrary to that Act.” He replied, “I say it is; and, besides, your preaching frightens people out of their wits.” “Sir, did you ever hear me preach?” “No.” “How, then, can you judge of what you never heard!” “Sir, by common report.” “Common report is not enough. Give me leave, sir, to ask, Is not your name Nash?” “My name is Nash.” “Sir, I dare not judge of you by common report: I think it not enough to judge by.” Here he paused awhile, and, having recovered himself, said, “I desire to know what this people comes here for:” on which one replied, “Sir, leave him to me; let an old woman answer him. You, Mr. Nash, take care of your body; we take care of our souls: and for the food of our souls we come here.” He replied not a word, but walked away.

As I returned the street was full of people, hurrying to and fro, and speaking great words. But when any of them asked, “Which is he?” and I replied, “I am he,” they were immediately silent. Several ladies following me into Mr. Merchant’s house, the servant told me there were some wanted to speak to me. I went to them, and said, “I believe, ladies, the maid mistook; you only wanted to look at me.” I added, “I do not expect that the rich and great should want either to speak with me or to hear me, for I speak the plain truth—a thing you hear little of, and do not desire to hear.” A few more words passed between us, and I retired.

1738. With regard to my own behaviour, I now renewed and wrote down my former resolutions:

(1) To use absolute openness and unreserve with all I should converse with.

(2) To labour after continual seriousness, not willingly indulging myself in any the least levity of behaviour, or in laughter,—no, not for a moment.

(3) To speak no word which does not tend to the glory of God ; in particular, not to talk of worldly things. Others may, nay must. But what is that to thee ? And

(4) To take no pleasure which does not tend to the glory of God ; thanking God every moment for all I do take, and therefore rejecting every sort and degree of it which I feel I cannot so thank Him *in* and *for*.

#### 4. Henry Fielding

[Henry Fielding (1707-54), the novelist, who wrote *Tom Jones*, made a voyage to Lisbon, and kept a journal, from which the following extract is taken.]

*Tuesday, Wednesday, 9th, 10th July 1754.*—These two days we had much the same fine weather, and made much the same way ; but, in the evening of the latter day, a pretty fresh gale sprung up, at N.N.W., which brought us by the morning in sight of the Isle of Wight.

*Thursday, 11th July.*—This gale continued till towards noon, when the east end of the island bore a little ahead of us. The captain, being unwilling to come to anchor, declared he would keep the sea ; but the wind got the better of him, so that about three he gave up the victory, and, making a sudden tack, stood in for the shore, passed by Spithead and Portsmouth, and came to an anchor at a place called Ryde on the island; as did a great number of merchant ships, who attended our commodore from the Downs, and watched his motions so narrowly, that they seemed to think themselves unsafe when they did not regulate their motions by his.

A most tragical incident fell out this day at sea. While the ship was under sail, but making, as will appear, no great way, a kitten, one of four of the feline inhabitants of the cabin, fell from the window into the water: an alarm was immediately given to the captain, who was then upon deck, and received it with the utmost concern. He immediately gave orders to the steersman in favour of the poor thing, as he called it; the sails were instantly slackened, and all hands, as the phrase is, employed to recover the poor animal. I was, I own, extremely surprised at this; less, indeed, at the captain's extreme tenderness, than at his conceiving any possibility of success; for, if puss had had nine thousand, instead of nine lives, I concluded they had been all lost. The boatswain, however, had more sanguine hopes; for, having stripped himself of his jacket, breeches, and shirt, he leapt bodily into the water, and, to my great astonishment, returned to the ship, bearing the motionless animal in his mouth. Nor was this, I observed, a matter of such great difficulty as it appeared to my ignorance, and possibly may seem to that of my fresh-water reader: the kitten was now exposed to air and sun on the deck, where its life, of which it retained no symptoms, was despaired of by all.

The captain's humanity, if I may so call it, did not so totally destroy his philosophy as to make him yield himself up to affliction on this melancholy occasion. Having felt his loss like a man, he resolved to show he could bear it like one; and, having declared he had rather have lost a cask of rum or brandy, betook himself to threshing at backgammon with the Portuguese friar, in which innocent amusement they passed their leisure hours.

But as I have, perhaps, a little too wantonly endeavoured to raise the tender passions of my readers in this narrative, I should think myself unpardonable if I concluded it without giving them the satisfaction of

hearing that the kitten at last recovered, to the great joy of the good captain ; but to the great disappointment of some of the sailors, who asserted that the drowning of a cat was the very surest way of raising a favourable wind, a supposition of which, though we have heard several plausible accounts, we will not presume to assign the true original reason.

### 5. Fanny Burney

[Fanny Burney was the author of a novel named *Evelina*, and was a friend of Dr. Samuel Johnson. Her *Diary* is more lively than her novel, as the following passage will show.]

*Kew Palace, Monday, 2nd February.*—What an adventure I had this morning ! one that has occasioned me the severest personal terror I ever experienced in my life.

I had proceeded in my quick way nearly half round the Gardens, when I suddenly perceived, through some trees, two or three figures. Relying on the instructions of Dr. John, I concluded them to be workmen or gardeners, yet tried to look sharp, and in so doing, as they were less shaded, I thought I saw the person of his Majesty.

Alarmed past all possible expression, I waited not to know more, but turning back, ran off with all my might. But what was my terror to hear myself pursued !—to hear the voice of the King himself loudly and hoarsely calling after me, “ Miss Burney ! Miss Burney ! ”

I protest I was ready to die. I knew not in what state he might be at the time ; I only knew the orders to keep out of his way were universal ; that the Queen would highly disapprove any unauthorized meeting, and that the very action of my running away might deeply, in his present irritable state, offend him.

Nevertheless, on I ran, too terrified to stop, and in search of some short passage, for the garden is full of little labyrinths, by which I might escape.

The steps still pursued me, and still the poor hoarse and altered voice rang in my ears ;—more and more footsteps resounded frightfully behind me,—the attendants all running, to catch their eager master, and the voices of the two Doctor Willises loudly exhorting him not to heat himself so unmercifully.

Heavens ! how I ran ! I do not think I should have felt the hot lava from Vesuvius—at least, not the hot cinders,—had I so run during its eruption. My feet were not even sensible that they even touched the ground.

Soon after I heard other voices, shriller, though less nervous, call out, “ Stop ! stop ! stop ! ”

I could by no means consent : I knew not what was purposed, but I recollect fully my agreement with Dr. John that very morning, that I should decamp if surprised, and not be named.

My own fears and repugnance, also, after a flight and disobedience like this, were doubled in the thought of not escaping : I knew not to what I might be exposed, should the malady be then high, and take the turn of resentment. Still, therefore, on I flew ; and such was my speed, so almost incredible to relate or recollect, that I fairly believe no one of the whole party could have overtaken me, if these words, from one of the attendants, had not reached me, “ Doctor Willis begs you to stop ! ”

“ I cannot ! I cannot ! ” I answered, still flying on, when he called out, “ You must, ma’am ; it hurts the King to run.”

Then indeed I stopped—in a state of fear really amounting to agony. I turned round ; I saw the two doctors had got the King between them, and three attendants of Dr. Willis’s were hovering about. They all slackened their pace as they saw me stand still ;

but such was the excess of my alarm, that I was wholly insensible to the effects of a race which, at any other time, would have required an hour's recruit.

As they approached, some little presence of mind happily came to my command ; it occurred to me that, to appease the wrath of my flight, I must now show some confidence : I therefore faced them as undauntedly as I was able, only charging the nearest of the attendants to stand by my side.

When they were within a few yards of me, the King called out, " Why did you run away ? "

Shocked at a question impossible to answer, yet a little assured by the mild tone of his voice, I instantly forced myself forward to meet him. The effort answered : I looked up, and met all the wonted benignity of countenance, though something still of wildness in his eyes. Think, however, of my surprise, to feel him put both his hands round my two shoulders and then kiss my cheek !

What a conversation followed ! When he saw me fearless he grew more and more alive. . . . Everything that came uppermost in his mind he mentioned ; he seemed to have just such remains of his flightiness as heated his imagination without deranging his reason, and robbed him of all control over his speech, though nearly in his perfect state of mind as to his opinions.

What a scene ! how variously was I affected by it ! but, on the whole, how inexpressibly thankful to see him so nearly himself—so little removed from recovery.

## 6. James Boswell

*Tuesday, 5th October.*—I rose, and wrote my Journal till about nine ; and then went to Dr. Johnson, who sat up in bed and talked and laughed. I

said, it was curious to look back ten years, to the time when we first thought of visiting the Hebrides. How distant and improbable the scheme then appeared ! Yet here we were actually among them.—“ Sir (said he), people may come to do anything almost, by talking of it. I really believe, I could talk myself into building a house upon island Isa, though I should probably never come back again to see it. I could easily persuade Reynolds to do it ; and there would be no great sin in persuading him to do it. Sir, he would reason thus : ‘ What will it cost me to be there once in two or three summers ?—Why, perhaps, five hundred pounds ; and what is that, in comparison of having a fine retreat, to which a man can go, or to which he can send a friend ? ’ He would never find out that he may have this within twenty miles of London.—Then I would tell him, that he may marry one of the Miss M’Leods, a lady of great family.—Sir, it is surprising how people will go to a distance for what they may have at home. I knew a lady who came up from Lincolnshire to Knightsbridge with one of her daughters and gave five guineas a week for a lodging and a warm bath ; that is, mere warm water. That, you know, could not be had in Lincolnshire ! She said, it was made either too hot or too cold there.”

We rode to the northern part of the island, where we saw the ruins of a church or chapel. We then proceeded to a place called Grissipol, or the rough Pool.

At Grissipol we found a good farm house, belonging to the Laird of Col, and possessed by Mr. M’Sweyn. On the beach here there is a singular variety of curious stones. I picked up one very like a small cucumber. By the by, Dr. Johnson told me, that Gay’s line in the *Beggar’s Opera*, “ As men should serve a cucumber,” etc., has no waggish meaning, with reference to men flinging away cucumbers as too *cooling*, which some have thought ; for it has been a common saying of physicians in England, that a cucumber should be well

sliced, and dressed with pepper and vinegar, and then thrown out, as good for nothing.—Mr. M'Sweyn's predecessors had been in Skye from a very remote period, upon the estate belonging to M'Leod ; probably before M'Leod had it. The name is certainly Norwegian, from *Sueno*, King of Norway. The present Mr. M'Sweyn left Skye upon the late M'Leod's raising his rents. He then got this farm from Col.

He appeared to be near fourscore ; but looked as fresh, and was as strong as a man of fifty. His son Hugh looked older ; and, as Dr. Johnson observed, had more the manners of an old man than he. I had often heard of such instances, but never saw one before. Mrs. M'Sweyn was a decent old gentlewoman. She was dressed in tartan, and could speak nothing but Erse. She said, she taught Sir James M'Donald Erse, and would teach me soon. I could now sing a verse of the song *Hatyin foam'eri*, made in honour of Allan, the famous Captain of Clanranald, who fell at Sherriff-muir ; whose servant, who lay on the field watching his master's dead body, being asked next day who that was, answered, “ He was a man yesterday.”

We were entertained here with a primitive heartiness. Whisky was served round in a shell, according to the ancient Highland custom. Dr. Johnson would not partake of it ; but, being desirous to do honour to the modes “ of other times,” drank some water out of the shell.

In the forenoon Dr. Johnson said, “ it would require great resignation to live in one of these islands.” —BOSWELL : “ I don't know, sir ; I have felt myself at times in a state of almost mere physical existence, satisfied to eat, drink, and sleep, and walk about, and enjoy my own thoughts ; and I can figure a continuation of this.” —JOHNSON : “ Ay, sir ; but if you were shut up here, your own thoughts would torment you ; you would think of Edinburgh or London, and that you could not be there.”

We set out after dinner for Breacacha, the family seat of the Laird of Col, accompanied by the young laird, who had now got a horse, and by the younger Mr. M'Sweyn, whose wife had gone thither before us, to prepare everything for our reception, the laird and his family being absent at Aberdeen. It is called Breacacha, or the Spotted Field, because in summer it is enamelled with clover and daisies, as young Col told me. We passed by a place where there is a very large stone, I may call it a *rock*;—“a vast weight for Ajax.” The tradition is, that a giant threw such another stone at his mistress, up to the top of a hill, at a small distance; and that she in return threw this mass down to him. It was all in sport.

As we advanced, we came to a large extent of plain ground. I had not seen such a place for a long time. Col and I took a gallop upon it by way of race. It was very refreshing to me, after having been so long taking short steps in hilly countries. It was like stretching a man’s legs after being cramped in a short bed.—We also passed close by a large extent of sandhills, near two miles square. Dr. Johnson said, “he never had the image before. It was horrible, if barrenness and danger could be so.” I heard him, after we were in the house of Breacacha, repeating to himself, as he walked about the room,

“And smother’d in the dusty whirlwind, dies.”

Probably he had been thinking of the whole of the simile in *Cato*, of which that is the concluding line; the sandy desert had struck him so strongly. The sand has of late been blown over a good deal of meadow; and the people of the island say that their fathers remembered much of the space which is now covered with sand, to have been under tillage. Col’s house is situated on a bay called Breacacha Bay. We found here a neat new-built gentleman’s house, better than any we had been in since we were at Lord Errol’s.

Dr. Johnson relished it much at first, but soon remarked to me, that “there was nothing becoming a Chief about it: it was a mere tradesman’s box.” He seemed quite at home, and no longer found any difficulty in using the Highland address; for, as soon as we arrived, he said, with a spirited familiarity, “Now, Col, if you could get us a dish of tea.”—Dr. Johnson and I had each an excellent bed-chamber. We had a dispute which of us had the best curtains. His were rather the best, being of linen; but I insisted that my bed had the best posts, which was undeniable. “Well, (said he,) if you *have* the best *posts*, we will have you tied to them and whipped.”—I mention this slight circumstance, only to show how ready he is, even in mere trifles, to get the better of his antagonist, by placing him in a ludicrous view. I have known him sometimes use the same art, when hard pressed in serious disputation. Goldsmith, I remember, to retaliate for many a severe defeat which he has suffered from him, applied to him a lively saying in one of Cibber’s comedies, which puts this part of his character in a strong light.—There is no arguing with Johnson; for, *if his pistol misses fire, he knocks you down with the butt-end of it.*

## SELECTED DIALOGUES

Roger Ascham and Lady Jane Grey

(WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR.)

[*Roger Ascham prepares the mind of his pupil, Lady Jane Grey, for the perils that will encompass her after her marriage.*]

Ascham. Thou art going, my dear young lady, into a most awful state ; thou art passing into matrimony and great wealth. God hath willed it ; submit in thankfulness.

Thy affections are rightly placed and well distributed. Love is a secondary passion in those who love most, a primary in those who love least. He who is inspired by it in a high degree is inspired by honour in a higher : it never reaches its plenitude of growth and perfection but in the most exalted minds. Alas ! alas !

Jane. What aileth my virtuous Ascham ? What is amiss ? Why do I tremble ?

Ascham. I remember a sort of prophecy, made three years ago : it is a prophecy of thy condition, and of my feelings on it. Recollectest thou who wrote, sitting upon the sea-beach the evening after an excursion to the Isle of Wight, these verses ?—

Invisibly bright water ! so like air,  
On looking down I feared thou couldst not bear  
My little bark, of all light barks most light,  
And look'd again, and drew me from the sight,  
And, hanging back, breath'd each fresh gale aghast,  
And held the bench, not to go on so fast.

*Jane.* I was very childish when I composed them ; and, if I had thought any more about the matter, I should have hoped you had been too generous to keep them in your memory as witnesses against me.

*Ascham.* Nay, they are not much amiss for so young a girl, and there being so few of them, I did not reprove thee. Half-an-hour, I thought, might have been spent more unprofitably ; and I now shall believe it firmly, if thou wilt but be led by them to meditate a little on the similarity of situation in which thou then wert to what thou art now in.

*Jane.* I will do it, and whatever else you command ; for I am weak by nature, and very timorous, unless where a strong sense of duty holdeth and supporteth me. There God acteth, and not his creature.

Those were with me at sea who would have been attentive to me if I had seemed to be afraid, even though worshipful men and women were in the company ; so that something more powerful threw my fear overhead. Yet I never will go again upon the water.

*Ascham.* Exercise that beauteous couple, that mind and body, much and variously, but at home, at home, Jane ! indoors, and about things indoors ; for God is there too. We have rocks and quicksands on the banks of our Thames, O lady, such as Ocean never heard of ; and many (who knows how soon !) may be engulfed in the current under their garden-walls.

*Jane.* Thoroughly do I now understand you. Yes indeed, I have read evil things of courts ; but I think nobody can go out bad who entereth good, if timely and true warning shall have been given.

*Ascham.* I see perils on perils which thou dost not see, albeit thou art wiser than thy poor old master. And it is not because Love hath blindeth thee, for that surpasseth his supposed omnipotence ; but it is because thy tender heart, having always leant affectionately upon good, hath felt and known nothing of evil.

I once persuaded thee to reflect much : let me now persuade thee to avoid the habitude of reflection, to lay aside books, and to gaze carefully and steadfastly on what is under and before thee.

*Jane.* I have well bethought me of my duties : O how extensive they are ! what a goodly and fair inheritance ! But tell me, would you command me never more to read Cicero and Epictetus and Plutarch and Polybius ? The others I do resign ; they are good for the arbour and for the gravel-walk ; yet leave unto me, I do beseech you, my friend and father, leave unto me for my fireside and for my pillow, truth, eloquence, courage, constancy.

*Ascham.* Read them on thy marriage-bed, on thy child-bed, on thy death-bed. Thou spotless undrooping lily, they have fenced thee right well. These are the men for men : these are to fashion the bright and blessed creatures whom God one day shall smile upon in thy chaste bosom. Mind thou thy husband.

*Jane.* I sincerely love the youth who hath espoused me ; I love him with the fondest, the most solicitous affection ; I pray to the Almighty for his goodness and happiness, and do forget at times, unworthy suppliant ! the prayers I should have offered for myself. Never fear that I will disparage my kind religious teacher, by disobedience to my husband in the most trying duties.

*Ascham.* Gentle is he, gentle and virtuous ; but time will harden him ; time must harden even thee, sweet Jane ! Do thou, complacently and indirectly, lead him from ambition.

*Jane.* He is contented with me and with home.

*Ascham.* Ah, Jane ! Jane ! men of high estate grow tired of contentedness.

*Jane.* He told me he never liked books unless I read them to him. I will read them to him every evening ; I will open new worlds to him richer than those discovered by the Spaniard ; I will conduct him to

treasures, O what treasures ! on which he may sleep in innocence and peace.

*Ascham.* Rather do thou walk with him, ride with him, play with him, be his faery, his page, his everything that love and poetry have invented ; but watch him well ; sport with his fancies ; turn them about like the ringlets round his cheek ; and if ever he meditate on power, go toss up thy baby to his brow, and bring back his thoughts into his heart by the music of thy discourse.

Teach him to live unto God and unto thee ; and he will discover that women, like the plants in woods, derive their softness and tenderness from the shade.

### Shenstone and his Ballad

(HARRY C. MINCHIN.)

William Shenstone, b. Nov. 13, 1714.

“ Shenstone never married, though he might have attained the lady, whoever she was, to whom his Pastoral Ballad was addressed.”

DR. JOHNSON.

DATE: about 1754. SCENE: the Leasowes.

[*Shenstone is discovered at his front door, parleying with certain shabby individuals—broker's men, in short—whom, by dint of much cajolery and written promises to pay, he at length induces to depart. He is a personable man, but his dress is careless and his demeanour indolent.*]

*Shenstone [talking to himself, in the fashion of those who are so much alone].* There's an end of them for the present—but an end of my inspiration too. Well, I'll re-create my spirits by a stroll through my beloved domain. Yon stream, methinks, might with benefit be diverted and dammed ; I should so get another

pool to mirror the sunset. Let's see to it. Thomas ! Here he comes, lumbering round the coppice. But stay, that's never Thomas ! Thomas doesn't wear a snuff-coloured suit and a grey wig. Besides, there's some one with him. A plague on it, am I to have no peace this morning ? I'll hide me behind the bushes, that I may know their business. But indeed I can hear it already ; so does the snuff-coloured fellow pawl down the ear-trumpet of his companion.

*Johnson [for Reynolds and he are the intruders].*  
Well, sir, here we are in Mr. Shenstone's famous grounds ; but, as I was saying to you in the post-chaise, whether to plant a walk in undulating curves and to place a bench at every turn—

*Reynolds.* Well, sir, as the bench is here and the day not, let's utilize it. *[He sits down.]*

*Johnson.* As you will, sir. *[Sits also.]* As I was saying, whether to place a bench at every turn where there is an object to catch the view—

*Reynolds.* If you talk of views, here's a near and pleasant one ! At the foot of yonder hawthorn, now, what a background for a portrait ; one of my ladies, you know, playing with a child or a dog.

*Johnson.* To catch, I say, the view ; whether to make water run where it will be heard, and to stagnate where it will be seen—

*Reynolds.* *Stagnate ?* Not a very pretty word—I suppose he's thinking of his Virgil, though—“*effuso stagnantem flumine Nilum.*”

*Johnson [testily].* You are pleased to interrupt me. How can I possibly remember what else it is that Mr. Shenstone has done . . . where it will be seen . . . oh, yes . . . and whether to . . . to . . . to do something else of an equally trivial character demands any great power of mind—I will not inquire.

*[Puffs and blows, and mops his forehead.]*

*Shenstone [aside].* Johnson and his friend Reynolds—unless report has lied to me. *[Emerging from his*

*retreat]* Quite right, sir ! Why fatigue your exalted intellect with any such inquiry, when Mr. Shenstone [*bowing*] is ready to answer it in his proper person ?

[*They rise and bow.*

*Johnson.* Sir, your humble servant. We could not, being in your vicinity, leave Mr. Shenstone unvisited. Though you, I must suppose, find your content in rustic surroundings and pastoral employments, and I mine in the human tide that ebbs and flows through the Strand, yet we have this in common, besides a love of letters, that we "were nursed upon the selfsame hill"—although, to my loss, you entered Pembroke College after I had left it.

*Reynolds.* And kept up its reputation as a nest of singing-birds, eh, Mr. Johnson ?

*Johnson.* Aye, sir ! And what news, Mr. Shenstone, from Apollo's court ? Have you no emanation from the rural reign to charm our urban ears ?

*Shenstone [mollified].* Gentlemen, you are welcome. I will admit that early morning found me communing with the Muses. Since then I have been annoyed by the presence of certain minions of the law, such as are found also—Mr. Johnson will bear me out—in the neighbourhood of the Strand. These did something to dissipate my thoughts. But you are men of taste—what do you think of this stanza ?—

" I prized every hour that went by  
    Beyond all that pleased me before,  
But now they are past, and I sigh,  
    And I grieve that I prized them no more."

*Reynolds.* You must have been very happy, sir, else had your happiness not been so sweetly expressed.

*Johnson.* True ; yet, if a man valued his felicity so enthusiastically, it is perhaps superfluous to regret a hypothetically defective appreciation of it. If he prized each hour more than its predecessor, it is hard

to imagine how he could have prized them more than he did.

*Shenstone.* Wait a moment !

“ When forced the fair nymph to forgo,  
 What anguish I felt in my heart !  
 Yet I thought—but it might not be so—  
 'Twas with pain that she saw me depart.”

*Johnson.* Ah, sir, there speaks the heart indeed. All is now explained, and your hyperbole excused. We pardon everything to love and nature. . . . And said the lady nothing, then, to confirm you in your opinion ?

*Shenstone.* Not a single word. And I had better follow her example, for I grow tedious.

*Reynolds.* Nay, sir, pray go on. We are sure there's more, and wish to hear it.

*Shenstone.* I will, then, in view of your complaisance. You must know I do not often have such competent auditors. 'Tis but a ballad of old days [*sighing*], yet I was never better pleased with aught I writ.

“ She gazed as I slowly withdrew ;  
 My path I could hardly discern ;  
 So sweetly she bade me adieu,  
 I thought that she bade me return.”

But, you see, gentlemen, I only *thought* it ; I lacked any certitude or assurance. And so, being of a retiring disposition, here I am—in an earthly paradise, as I think you'll admit—but alone.

*Reynolds.* Perhaps, sir, you were too easily daunted. What say you, Mr. Johnson ?

*Johnson.* Sir, in default of my own opinion, which in such matters is a little past its heyday, I'll give you Shakespeare's : “ She is a woman, therefore to be won.”

*Shenstone* [*meditatively*]. “ To be won ”—it's possible. But, gentlemen [*with a burst of confidence*], are

not we that aspire to be creative artists the most impracticable of all men? Chasing every butterfly of the imagination that flits across our path, are we not diverted from the pursuit of solid happiness? Busy with the quest of some ideal perfection which perpetually recedes as we approach it, we have not time, perhaps, to grasp those realities by which the most of mankind are satisfied to live. And so our grey hairs find us empty-handed; and art, even as time, devours its own children. At least, such seems likely to be the issue in my own case.

*Reynolds.* But, sir, the artist may at any rate hope to enrich posterity by the creations of his mind and hand.

*Shenstone.* *Sic vos non vobis*, in fact, after the fashion of the honey-bees? Yes, such may be the expectation of a fortunate few, as who can doubt that hath looked upon your canvases? But the most of us resemble children building castles upon the shore, structures speedily obliterated by the incoming tide of time.

*Johnson.* Nay, sir, this is to argue too despondently. A man may yet produce a masterpiece, ere he's done. Nor do I fully apprehend the bearing of these reflections upon the matter in hand.

*Shenstone.* And yet, sir, 'tis clear enough. The poems that I have not written—the estate that I have not perfected—these are my preoccupations—upon these I squander time, energies, and money—these cheat me of the actual well-being which, but for them, I might attain. And observe, sir, that constant self-criticism which is the bane of the artist—or, some would say, his spur—encroaches on the most intimate concerns of his life.

*[He pauses and becomes immersed in thought.]*

*Reynolds* [gently]. Pray continue, sir. It is of the lady, is it not, that you would speak? Sure, she must possess superlative qualities, to have captured the esteem of so nice a mind.

*Shenstone.* She does indeed. The deficiencies are

mine. Whether I can make and keep her happy—whether the pursuits which to me are a necessity of living may not soon come to weary her—whether, indeed, my poor house (for, to tell you the truth, my garden swallows up the funds which are overdue for its reparation) be fit to welcome her—these are among the problems that confront me. And so I go on, day after day, week after week, month after month, and get no nearer to a solution of them.

*Johnson [who has with difficulty been suppressing signs of impatience].* And, sir, if you don't take care, you never will ! Then your paradise must remain imperfect, because it lacks an Eve. Sir, if you had undergone a tithe of the hardships I encountered in my youth; you'd have never come to this wretched pitch of vacillation. Sir, when I married, I had—no, I'll not reveal the exiguity of my resources at that time. But I believed in myself—and we didn't starve. That's enough. Poh, sir, marry and have done with it. Miss will have you, if you ask her, I'll be bound. Publish your works by subscription, mend the leaks in your roof, bid the parson put up your banns, and Reynolds and I will dance at your wedding !

*Shenstone [stiffly].* Sir, I'm obliged to you for your advice. As to your willingness to attend my nuptials, the offer is handsome but premature. I have here several projects on hand which must first engage my attention.

*Johnson.* In connection with your paradise, I suppose. Come, Mr. Shenstone, do you mean to tell me that you really find any genuine solace or satisfaction in abandoning your intellect to the pointing of your prospects, the entangling of your walks, and the winding of your waters ?

*Shenstone.* Sir, I do, however you may condemn the admission. Is it nothing to make nature fairer than she was before ? The retirement of the country, together with the enjoyment of my own reflections, is more to me than the society of splenetic wits and

captious templars. Of course you can't believe it of me, any more than you could of Cowley. I am a living refutation of your preposterous theory that he who is tired of London is tired of life. You, I dare swear, would be sick of the country in five days ; but I have not wearied of it in as many years.

*Reynolds.* And I hope you never may. There is room for every variety of taste, though our friend here is too stubborn to allow it. For your private perplexities, dear sir, I hope that time and your own good genius will solve them. But come, Mr. Johnson, we that are cits must now leave Mr. Shenstone to his garden and his poetry. Sir, your servant.

*Shenstone.* Yours, sir, very heartily—and yours. [His visitors withdraw, after exchange of civilities.] Now I can get on with my gardening ! I shall make the better progress for having silenced that fellow Johnson for once in his life. There's a charm about his friend, though, that would melt an iceberg. It melted my reserve—too much, in truth. But what's that ? [A bird flaps across his vision.] A wood-pigeon. Now I wonder if I can find its nest. [Pushes his way through a thorn-tree thicket.] Sure enough, there it is—just one layer of sticks, and another laid across it. The barest platform, yet what a kingdom of happiness it affords. Ah, Shenstone, there's a parable for you—and a warning ! The very episode that I wove into my ballad, more years since than I like to think on. Let me see . . . let me see. How did it go ?

“ I have found out a gift for my fair,  
I have found where the wood-pigeons breed.”

I'll indoors forthwith, and put pen to paper. Perhaps—who knows ?—she'll yet give me the answer that I want. . . . For I do want it, don't I ? Yes, I honestly believe I do. [Exit, repeating under his breath :

“ I have found out a gift for my fair.”

## SELECTED SPEECHES

## The Power and Responsibility of the Press

(*A Speech delivered by the Earl of Rosebery in London on April 12, 1913.*)

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,—I have become so rusty in the art of speaking that I feel to-night as though I were delivering my maiden speech. I had indeed hoped to have done with speaking, but remember that years ago your club honoured me with an invitation at the time when I owned a residence near Naples, and I was guiltily conscious of the fact that I preferred going to Naples to attending the dinner. I therefore felt that, if you wished to claim it, you had a mortgage upon my services. Nevertheless, I don't feel in high spirits when approaching an audience which I regard as by far the most difficult that I have ever addressed—a collection of the cream (if that were not a confusion of metaphor) of that great confraternity, that great freemasonry, which is called the Press, and which is composed of the most critical, almost cynical (if that adjective were not offensive), and the most *blasé* listeners to speeches of which any audience is composed.

My only comfort is this—that, owing to circumstances, I occupy a humble place on the slope of the mountain of onlookers of which you occupy the top. You are critical, you are dispassionate; you sound occasionally the bugle notes of war and strife from the top of the mountain, but in the secluded spot

which I occupy I have no wish to stir up strife, and I observe the whole drama in an atmosphere to which you cannot aspire. During the Crimean War, while fighting took place on the heights of Alma, it was stated that a hermit lived near the foot and was totally unconscious for a long time that any war had been going on. While those present inspired and conducted the contending forces I am the hermit. It is all very well to be a hermit, but it does not make the position the less formidable when one has to address an audience of journalists.

One terror at any rate has been removed. The great terror of every public speaker in his time has been the reporter. So far as I can make out, the reporter has largely disappeared. He has ceased to report the speeches to which it was understood the whole community were looking forward with breathless interest. He has turned his pencil into a plough-share ; what he has done with it, I do not exactly know. At any rate, he has ceased to be that terror to public speakers that he was in my time ; and he no longer reports—except the great lions of the Front Benches, every wag of whose tail it is necessary for every citizen to observe.

But at present, outside the proceedings of those great men, reports have ceased, to the infinite relief, if I may say so, of the speakers. I speak with feeling as a speaker. No conscientious speaker ever rose in the morning and read his morning newspaper without having a feeling of pain, to see in it, reported verbatim, with agonizing conscientiousness, things which he would rather not have said, and things which he thought ought not to bear repetition. The agonizing conscientiousness of the reporter caused a reaction in the speaker which no words can describe, except the testimony of one who had experienced it. Then let me take the point of view of the reader, which is now my only point of view. Does any reader of the last

twenty years ever read the speeches that are reported ? I have no doubt that those whose duty it is to criticize, laud, or rebuke the speakers in the public Press feel it their painful duty to read the speeches. But does anybody else ? Does any impartial reader of the newspapers, the man who buys a paper on his way to the City in the morning, and an evening paper in the evening—does he ever read the speeches ? I can conscientiously say, having been a speaker myself, that I never could find anybody who read my speeches. It was quite different in the time when I was young, when practically the whole family sat down after breakfast and read the whole debate through. But the present age is in too great a hurry for that. They take the abstract ; they may possibly read the abstract of speeches ; but I appeal to an intelligent audience when I assert with confidence that not one man in a hundred ever read the speeches which were so largely reported in the Press. Their removal from the Press gave space to other matters of greater interest, and is one of the greatest reliefs the newspaper reader ever experienced.

I always find it a little difficult to know what to say, because the Press, like a great steam-engine, is a little sensitive in relation to itself. If the Press were not sensitive it would not have the sympathy of the public—it could not speak the voice of the nation. Those who would speak to journalists have only one safe course : they must adhere to certain principles. They must assert the power of the Press, they must assert the potentiality of the Press, they must assert the responsibility of the Press, and, fourthly, they must assert in the strongest language possible that the British Press is the best and cleanest in the world. To all those four principles I give my conscientious adherence. I believe in the power of the Press. I believe in the potentiality of the Press even more. I believe even more in the responsibility of the

Press ; and I believe most of all that the British Press is the best and cleanest in the world. But I am not quite sure that that covers the whole ground. There are two other things to be observed. One is (and it is no new one) the enormous monopoly which is now exercised by the Press. The great daily newspapers have such a monopoly, owing to the enormous cost of founding new ones, which is obvious to you all. I do not know what the cost is, but I have heard it put at from a half to three-quarters of a million, and even then with indifferent chances of success. Owing to the monopoly which is possessed and exercised by the principal daily newspapers of this country, their responsibility is greater than that of the newspaper of forty or fifty years ago.

Secondly, I would point out the great development of the Press. As far as I have been able to trace the origin of the Press, it dates from the threat of the Spanish Armada in 1588. It was then a mere fly-sheet, but it showed what was necessary or interesting to the people of this country. Now, every day journalists produce, not a newspaper, but a library, a huge production of information and knowledge upon every kind of subject. It may not be invidious to refer to one particular newspaper, though I know it will be a thorny subject. Take *The Times*, when it issued its South American Supplement. It was a weighty business—I have not perused it myself, but it contains, I imagine, every possible fact that could ever be known about South America. It weighed about one hundredweight. That is an extreme case, but it appealed to me on more than one occasion. If you consider that prodigious mass of information, that huge concretion of knowledge, launched upon the British public as a newspaper—and that is what the British public now expects—and just contrast that with anything that was known before these days, I think it involves a great responsibility, that Niagara

of information which is poured upon the British public every day, as well as conferring some benefit. The Press enables us to know, as far as it is possible, everything about everybody and everywhere. Let me take my point about the responsibility of the Press with regard to its omniscience. We hear a great deal about the apathy of the population about great questions. I think it is perfectly true. There is a profound apathy. People have no time to bother about anything except their own concerns and the last football match.

But is not that due to the prodigious amount of news, startling news very often, which the Press affords every inhabitant of these islands who buys a newspaper? Is it not the fact that it must be so—one feels that it must—that if a great number of impressions are hastily and successively made on the receptivity of the brain, those impressions are blunted, until the mental constitution becomes apathetic about other pieces of news? Do you not yourselves feel that, except, possibly, the blowing up of the Tower of London, there is hardly anything in the world to-night that could make you feel that anything great had occurred? How is it possible that a population, nurtured and fed on that perfect journalism, should have the slightest interest in any possible event that might occur on the morrow?

A hundred years ago there were two wars, one a great war and the other not so great, but very galling—the one with the United States of America, and the other the great struggle to try to beat down the superman Napoleon. Then the public had no interest in the world, nothing reported, except with regard to those two wars. I think that if we realized the difference between the journalism of those days and the journalism of the present day, we should feel that the responsibility for the apathy of the country as regards public questions is largely due to the perfection to

which journalism has been brought. In those far-off days there was the meagre sheet, which was issued two or three times a week, and the demands of war had practically shut three continents out from our purview altogether, whereas now we hear daily and hourly every item of news about every country and every person all over the world. Therefore, I say that the responsibility for the apathy of our people about public events must rest largely with the perfection of the Press. That being the case, at any rate this could be done—the influence of the great newspapers of this country could be made the best and most beneficent for the people who receive them.

Gentlemen, I do not wish to detain you, but it is perhaps the last time I shall address an assembly of journalists—or perhaps any assembly at all. I do not think I should choose an assembly of journalists, with that critical eye, for the one I should habitually address, but I wish to say one word more, in case I should never have again an opportunity to address an assembly of journalists. I speak very warmly and very sincerely when I say that your power and potentialities appeal to me more than anything else with regard to journalism. Your power is obviously enormous, and you must wish to exercise it with that conscientiousness and honour, as I believe you do exercise it; but the potentiality is something which I am not sure that even you always realize. I take it in regard to one question, the question of peace and war.

In some respects I do not suppose you have so much influence as Parliament; I do not suppose you have so much influence as Ministers. There was a famous saying attributed to a notable Scotsman two hundred years ago, that he knew a wise man who said that if they would let him have the writing of the ballads of the country he did not very much care who made the laws. Well, ballads do not matter much, but

newspapers do, and I should agree with that sentiment if you substituted the word "newspapers" for "ballads." Your power is enormous. As you give to the people you receive back from the people mutual electricity, which gives you your power.

All that is a commonplace. But with regard to peace and war there is no commonplace. With regard to legislation and so forth, you probably have not so much power as Ministers or members of Parliament, except when you embody the unmistakable voice of the people. With regard to peace and war, upon those issues you have paramount influence—far greater than any member of Parliament, as great as any Minister of the Crown himself. When critical occasions arise you can either magnify them or minimize them. I pray you in issues which involve peace and war diminish them as much as possible. Think what an awful responsibility is on you!

I think you have the power more than any other body of men to promote or to avert the horrors of war. I am quite sure that my humble advice is not needed by men who know their business so much better than I can know it, but they may sometimes, in the hurry of journalism—because it is a hurried profession—forget the great principles which must be inherent in the journalist. As they write, they may on impulse of the moment, in defence against the aggressive journalism from abroad, forget their obligation to their own country. And I would ask them in these few last words, when any such issue may occur, and God knows the atmosphere is electrical enough at this moment, not to say a word that may unnecessarily, or except in defence, bring about to their fellow countrymen the innumerable catastrophes of war.

“The Immortal Statesman”

*(Lord Brougham's Election Speech at Liverpool on October 8, 1812.)*

GENTLEMEN,—I feel it necessary after the fatigues of this long and anxious day, to entreat, as I did on a former occasion, that you would have the goodness to favour me with as silent a hearing as possible, that I may not by over-exertion in my present exhausted state, destroy that voice which I hope I may preserve to raise in your defence once more hereafter.

Gentlemen, I told you last night when we were near the head of the poll, that I, for one at least, would never lose heart in the conflict, or lower my courage in fighting your battles, or despair of the good cause although we should be fifty, a hundred, or even two hundred behind our enemies. It has happened this day, that we have fallen short of them, not quite by two hundred, but we have lost one hundred and seventy votes: I tell you this with the deepest concern, with feelings of pain and sorrow which I dare not trust myself in attempting to express. But I tell it you without any sensation approaching to despondency. This is the only feeling which I have not now present in my breast. I am overcome with your unutterable affection towards me and my cause. I feel a wonder mingled with gratitude, which no language can even attempt to describe, at your faithful, unwearied, untameable exertions in behalf of our common object. I am penetrated with an anxiety for its success, if possible more lively than any of yourselves can know who are my followers in this mighty struggle—an anxiety cruelly increased by that which as yet you are ignorant of, though you are this night to hear it. To my distinguished friends who surround

me, and connect me more closely with you, I am thankful beyond all expression. I am lost in admiration of the honest and courageous men amongst you who have resisted all threats as well as all bribes, and persevered in giving me their free unbought voices. For those unhappy persons who have been scared by imminent fear on their own and their children's behalf from obeying the impulse of their conscience, I feel nothing of resentment—nothing but pity and compassion. Of those who have thus opposed us, I think as charitably as a man can think in such circumstances. For this great town, (if it is indeed to be defeated in the contest, which I will not venture to suppose) for the country at large whose cause we are upholding—whose fight we are fighting—for the whole manufacturing and trading interests—for all who love peace—all who have no profit in war—I feel moved by the deepest alarm lest our grand attempt may not prosper. All these feelings are in my heart at this moment—they are various—they are conflicting—they are painful—they are burthen-some—but they are not overwhelming! and amongst them all, and I have swept round the whole range of which the human mind is susceptible—there is not one that bears the slightest resemblance to despair. I trust myself once more into your faithful hands—I fling myself again on you for protection—I call aloud to you to bear your own cause in your hearts—I implore of you to come forth in your own defence—for the sake of this vast town and its people—for the salvation of the middle and lower orders—for the whole industrious part of the whole country—I entreat you by your love of peace—by your hatred of oppression—by your weariness of burthen-some and useless taxation—by yet another appeal to which those must lend an ear who have been deaf to all the rest—I ask it for your families—for your infants—if you would avoid such a winter of horrors as the last!

It is coming fast upon us—already it is near at hand—yet a few short weeks and we may be in the midst of those unspeakable miseries, the recollection of which now rend your very souls. If there is one free-man amongst this immense multitude who has not tendered his voice,—and if he can be deaf to this appeal,—if he can suffer the threats of our antagonists to frighten him away from the recollections of the last dismal winter,—that man will not vote for me. But if I have the happiness of addressing one honest man amongst you, who has a care left for his wife and children, or for other endearing ties of domestic tenderness, (and which of us is altogether without them ?) that man will lay his hand on his heart when I now bid him do so,—and with those little threats of present spite ringing in his ear, he will rather consult his fears of greater evil by listening to the dictates of his heart, when he casts a look towards the dreadful season through which he lately passed—and will come bravely forward to place those men in Parliament whose efforts have been directed towards the restoration of peace, and the revival of trade.

Do not, gentlemen, listen to those who tell you the cause of freedom is desperate ;—they are the enemies of that cause and of you,—but listen to me,—for you know me,—and I am one who has never yet deceived you,—I say, then, that *it will be* desperate if you make no exertions to retrieve it. I tell you that your languor alone can betray it,—that it can only be made desperate through your despair. I am not a man to be cast down by temporary reverses, let them come upon me as thick, and as swift, and as sudden as they may. I am not he who is daunted by majorities in the outset of a struggle for worthy objects,—else I should not now stand here before you to boast of triumphs won in your cause. If your champions had yielded to the force of numbers,—of gold,—of power—if defeat could have dismayed them—then would

the African Slave Trade never have been abolished—then would the cause of Reform, which now bids fair to prevail over its enemies, have been long ago sunk amidst the desertions of its friends,—then would those prospects of peace have been utterly benighted, which I still devoutly cherish, and which even now brighten in our eyes,—then would the Orders in Council which I overthrew by your support have remained a disgrace to the British name, and an eternal obstacle to our best interests. I no more despond now than I have done in the course of those sacred and glorious contentions,—but it is for you to say whether to-morrow shall not make it my duty to despair. To-morrow is your last day,—your last efforts must then be made ;—if you put forth your strength the day is your own—if you desert me, it is lost. To win it I shall be the first to lead you on, and the last to forsake you.

Gentlemen, when I told you a little while ago that there were new and powerful reasons to-day for ardently desiring that our cause might succeed, I did not sport with you,—yourselves shall now judge of them. I ask you,—Is the trade with America of any importance to this great and thickly peopled town ? (cries of, Yes ! yes !) Is a continuance of the rupture with America likely to destroy that trade ? (loud cries of, It is ! it is !) Is there any man who would deeply feel it, if he heard that the rupture was at length converted into open war ? Is there a man present who would not be somewhat alarmed if he supposed that we should have another year without the American trade ? Is there any one of nerves so hardy, as calmly to hear that our Government have given up all negotiation—abandoned all hopes of speedy peace with America ? Then I tell that man to brace up his nerves,—I bid you all be prepared to hear what touched you all equally. We are by this day's intelligence at war with America in good earnest,

—our Government have at length issued letters of marque and reprisal against the United States ! (universal cries of, God help us ! God help us !) Aye, God help us ! God of His infinite compassion take pity on us ! God help and protect this poor town,—and this whole trading country !

Now, I ask you whether you will be represented in Parliament by the men who have brought this grievous calamity on your heads, or by those who have constantly opposed the mad career which was plunging us into it ? Whether will you trust the revival of your trade—the restoration of your livelihood—to them who have destroyed it, or to me whose counsels, if followed in time, would have averted this unnatural war, and left Liverpool flourishing in opulence and peace ? Make your choice,—for it lies with yourselves which of us shall be commissioned to bring back commerce and plenty,—they whose stubborn infatuation has chased those blessings away,—or we, who are only known to you as the strenuous enemies of their miserable policy, the fast friends of your best interests.

Gentlemen, I stand up in this contest against the friends and followers of Mr. Pitt, or, as they partially designate him, the immortal statesman now no more. *Immortal* in the miseries of his devoted country ! Immortal in the wounds of her bleeding liberties ! Immortal in the cruel wars which sprang from his cold miscalculating ambition ! Immortal in the intolerable taxes, and countless loads of debt which these wars have flung upon us—which the youngest man amongst us will not live to see the end of ! Immortal in the triumphs of our enemies, and the ruin of our allies, the costly purchase of so much blood and treasure ! Immortal in the afflictions of England, and the humiliation of her friends, through the whole results of his twenty years' reign, from the first rays of favour with which a delighted Court gilded his

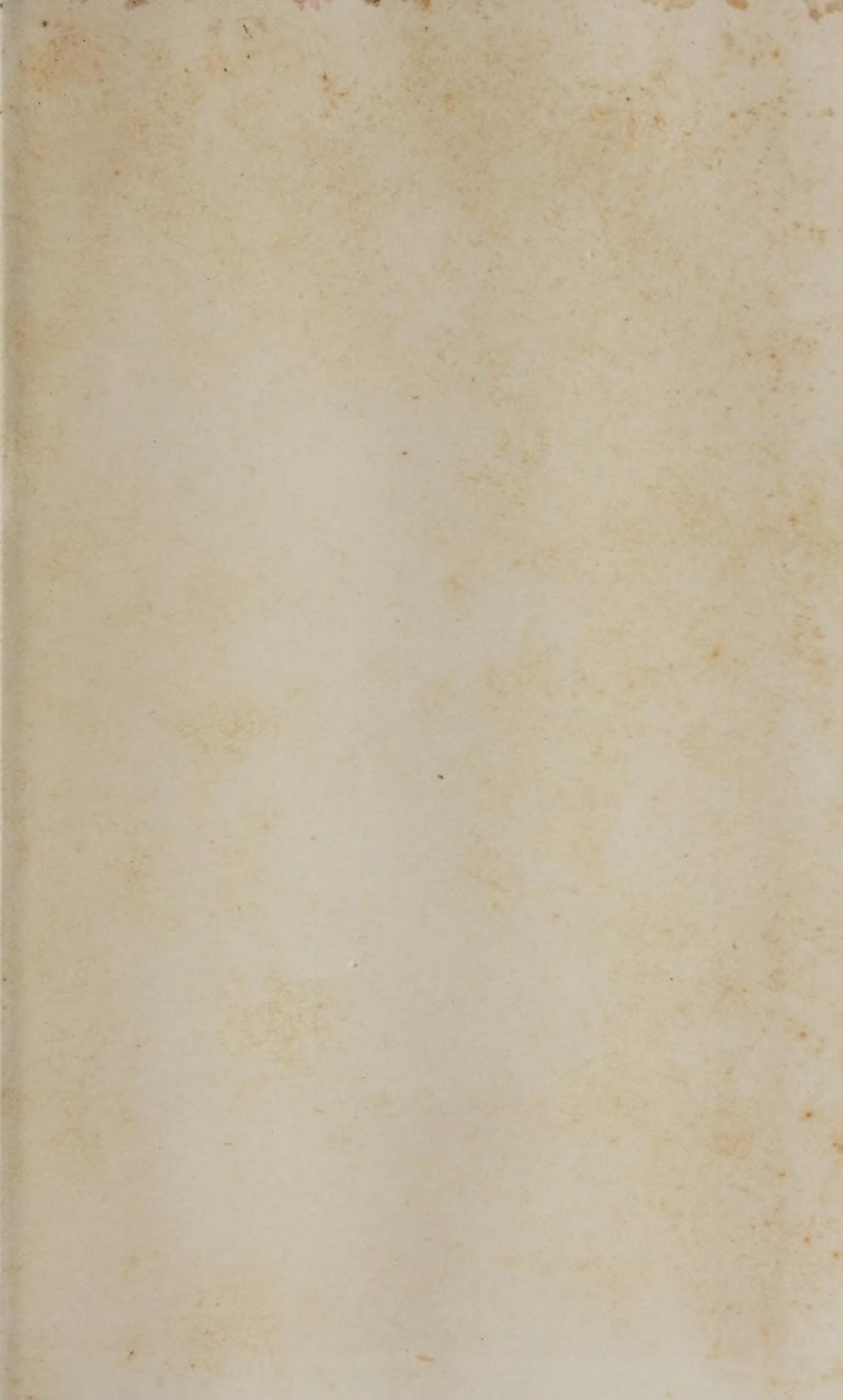
early apostacy, to the deadly glare which is at this instant cast upon his name by the burning metropolis of our last ally.\* But may no such immortality ever fall to my lot—let me rather live innocent and inglorious ; and when at last I cease to serve you, and to feel for your wrongs, may I have an humble monument in some nameless stone, to tell that beneath it there rests from his labours in your service, “ *an enemy of the immortal statesman—a friend of peace and of the people.*”

Friends ! you must now judge for yourselves, and act accordingly. Against us and against you stand those who call themselves the successors of that man. They are the heirs of his policy ; and if not of his immortality too, it is only because their talents for the work of destruction are less transcendent than his. They are his surviving colleagues. His fury survives in them if not his fire ; and they partake of all his infatuated principles, if they have lost the genius that first made those principles triumphant. If you choose them for your delegates, you know to what policy you lend your sanction—what men you exalt to power. Should you prefer me, your choice falls upon one who, if obscure and unambitious, will at least give his own age no reason to fear him, or posterity to curse him—one whose proudest ambition it is to be deemed the friend of Liberty and of Peace.

\* The news of the burning of Moscow had arrived by that day's post.

THE END





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